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The Shape of Things

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THE REVIVAL OF THE BRITISH FOREIGN Enlistment Act of 1870 is a clear example of unneutral behavior under the guise of "neutrality." As the act stands it apparently applies only to persons seeking to enlist for military service with the rebels. Penalties are imposed on anyone who accepts or who agrees to accept "any commission or engagement in the military or naval service of any foreign state at war with any foreign state at peace with His Majesty." The fascist forces in Spain are clearly a "foreign state" within the meaning of the act, but since they have not been recognized by London they cannot be described as a state at peace with His Majesty. Thus the government apparently stretched a point in applying the law to volunteers supporting Madrid. Incidentally, the same law exists in the Irish Free State, and it will be extremely interesting to see whether De Valera makes an effort to curb the activities of General O'Duffy and the recruiting of Irish fascists for service with Mola's armies in the northern part of Spain. It happens that several of these Irish contingents set sail from Liverpool and as British "subjects" could have been detained if the government had so desired. The British precedent is especially disheartening in view of the pressure being brought in this country to prevent Americans from going to the support of Spain. No protest has ever been made when Americans enrolled themselves in the service of petty dictators in any part of the world; it is scarcely credible that anyone should propose restrictions at a moment when democracy is endangered by the illegal intervention of Hitler and Mussolini.

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GENERAL MOTORS IS NOW STANDING PAT, "awaiting developments" in the automobile strike and counting, among other things, on public support. What the company means is that it is waiting for the United Automobile Workers and the Committee for Industrial Organization to exhaust their resources against the financial stone wall of General Motors, a corporation dominated by the du Ponts and J. P. Morgan. Meanwhile it is busy rousing public opinion by accusing the workers of "trying to run the business" and refusing to negotiate until the sitdown strikers leave the plants. At the same time it self-righteously refuses to promise that certain essential machinery will not be moved if the sitdown strikers evacuate, although, as Mr. Levinson points out

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elsewhere in this issue, the union has every reason to insist on such a promise in writing. Behind the scenes the giant corporation is stirring up anti-union sentiment among all those innocent bystanders in the automobile towns whose pocket-books are affected. Behind the scenes General Motors is also conspiring with its brother giants in coal and steel and glass to engage the C. I. O. in a series of nation-wide strikes to sap its energy.

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AT ANY MOMENT THE COLLAPSE OF PEACE negotiations in Detroit will send the automobile controversy to the White House. Then public opinion will become even more important than it is now. If only for selfish reasons it should be thrown to the side of labor. General Motors could still make large profits and at the same time help to stabilize recovery, especially for the little man, by increasing the purchasing power of its employees 25 per cent. Weekly earnings in the automobile industry for November, a big production month, are given as $36.16, with an hourly average of 79.3 cents. These figures, however, disguise the true picture. In 1934, when the hourly rate was 70 cents an hour, the average annual wage was less than $900, or $17.50 a week. Only one-third of the workers in the industry worked throughout the year. The hourly wage is higher at present and production has been spread over a longer period, but the automobile worker's annual earnings are far below the amount necessary for a decent standard of living. They are also far below the industry's capacity to pay.

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MR. ROOSEVELT'S ASSURANCES THAT NONE of the needy would be dropped from the relief rolls seem hardly to be borne out in his letter on relief asking $790,000,000 for relief during the remainder of the fiscal year and suggesting a maximum of $1,853,000,000 to cover all expenses for recovery and relief in 1938. The Conference of Mayors had set $877,500,000 as the minimum needed by the WPA until the end of June. Since part of the $790,000,000 will presumably go to the Resettlement Administration, it is estimated that the WPA will get about $500,000,000, which will mean dropping some 800,000 persons. In his budget message the President asked for 1938 only about 65 per cent of the amount required during the past year for recovery and relief—a "saving" of approximately a billion dollars. But at the same time he requested an additional $100,000,000 for armaments, an increase of $60,000,000 for civil departments and agencies, and a somewhat larger sum for his agricultural program. The theory that reduced unemployment will bring a corresponding decrease in relief requirements has proved entirely unsound so far. In a protracted depression the resources of the unemployed become increasingly depleted, and any effort to force a sudden curtailment in relief rolls would leave the jobless in a more serious plight than they were in back in 1932. WPA workers have no alternative but to organize and bring such mass pressure as they can command on the Administration.

LEON TROTSKY'S ARRIVAL IN MEXICO HAS brought a troublesome problem to a country that is more accustomed to trouble than was his last place of refuge. The Mexican government will find it easier than did Norway to withstand pressure from Moscow to drive Trotsky out, first because Mexico is comfortably remote from the Soviet Union and second because it has no diplomatic relations with the Soviet government to guard against upset. Even so, the privilege of serving as asylum for Russia's most famous exile may well prove an exacting one. The Mexican government has announced that it intends to put no curbs on Trotsky's freedom of movement; and he, in turn, has promised to engage in no political activities. But even assuming complete sincerity and good-will on both sides, a peaceful sojourn is hardly to be expected. Mexico's Communists and certain labor groups which bitterly opposed Trotsky's admission to the country will do their best to make his stay a *casus belli,* although they have been ordered to refrain from demonstrations, while his own partisans are not to be counted upon to smooth his path.

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WILL 1937 FINALLY SEE RATIFICATION OF THE federal child-labor amendment? President Roosevelt's direct appeal to the governors of non-ratifying states, echoed by the voice from Palo Alto, spurs on the drive to get the assent of the twelve more states necessary to make the amendment law. More than 100,000 children were withdrawn from industry and sent back to school under the NRA. But in the first five months of 1936, as compared with the same period in 1935, child labor increased 150 per cent. A poll taken by the American Institute of Public Opinion came out 61 per cent in favor of the amendment and showed that in all but three of the states where ratification has been defeated the people are opposed to the action of their legislatures. Objection to the amendment is due partly to the fear that "limit, regulate, and prohibit" gives Congress too sweeping a power and means an invasion of states' rights. But most of it comes from manufacturers who employ children.

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THE BULLY OF BERLIN TOOK A LITTLE TIME off from his hilarious game of scaring the daylights out of France and Great Britain to annoy the doughty Queen of the Netherlands, Wilhelmina, whose daughter Juliana has just married a German prince. This German prince, Bernhard zu Lippe-Biesterfeld, says he "feels Hollandish" and has shown all too plainly that he prefers the well-kept, butter-fed household of Wilhelmina and the sunny disposition of Juliana to the madhouse of Adolf, where the national slogan is "Let 'em eat cannon" and the obscene "Horst Wessel" song rings incessantly through the fascist darkness. For this sin the Nazi press conducted a journalistic pogrom against the Prince and his adopted country, complaining because the Nazi flag was not flown during the festivities and because the prince felt that no "foreign [i.e., German] national anthem" should be played in his honor. The Gestapo

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entered the game and held up the passports of four innocent German princesses who had been chosen as bridesmaids. Under pressure passports were issued to three of the princesses who presently found themselves stranded on the border with only four dollars apiece. Queen Wilhelmina rescued the princesses. After that she rolled up her sleeves and wrote a note to the Nazi government. The wedding came off in all its anticipated splendor; and Queen Wilhelmina received the congratulations of Hitler even though an orchestra conductor had refused to play the "Horst Wessel" song.

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WE CANNOT MOURN GLENN FRANK'S PASSING as president of the University of Wisconsin, nor can we join the new alliance of Hearst and the respectable press in deploring the action of the Board of Regents. The whole episode has been instructive in revealing the tie-up between the press and the business interests and the way this tie-up ramifies into American higher education. There can be no doubt that the regents exercised their legitimate powers. What still remains unclear is Governor La Follette's role in the affair. It is difficult to see how he could have hoped to gain politically by engineering, as it is charged, an anti-Frank movement among the regents. If he was part of such a movement, it could have been only at the risk of his own political fortunes and in pursuance of the ideas of progressivism with which the La Follettes have been associated. Whether or not the case had its origin in politics, it is clear that it is now being used as a means of sideswiping the whole farmer-labor progressive movement. The present talk in Madison about a joint move by Democrats and Republicans in the state legislature to put the Governor on the spot is part of a wider campaign to smear a national progressive movement by attacking the La Follette leadership. The campaign will fail, but it is a foretaste of what Progressives may expect when the issue involved is more than a tempest in a teapot.

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AN ITALIAN HOLLYWOOD WILL BE THE NEXT goldfish bowl to come out of the hat of Europe's chief prestidigitator. Not content with making an empire grow where a kingdom stood before, Mussolini intends to make a cinema city sprout on the arid plains of Quadraro, on the road to Frascati, just south of Rome. Already, we learn from the Swedish journal, *Stockholms Tidningen,* thousands of workmen are laying the foundations of ten huge studios, two lakes for marine scenes, and streets, houses, public squares, even villages, which will be built in imitation of everything from New York to Novosibirsk. Meanwhile Roncoroni, a well-known Italian movie star, has gone to Hollywood to recruit talent among directors, actors, and writers, and Walter Wanger, an American director who has demonstrated his love for fascism, is in Italy drawing up studio plans under the expert supervision of Il Duce himself. By the end of 1937 Italy will have the most Complete, Tremendous, Colossal, Super-Film Center in Europe.

Peace Without Victory

THREE conclusions emerge from Mr. Roosevelt's message to Congress. One is that, despite his overwhelming victory in the election, he does not intend in the next four years to follow up the gains made in the past four years. Another is that the New Deal has evolved no new points of view, has not clarified its economic thinking, has produced no new techniques for improving or controlling the social system. We may pretty much expect the Administration to go back to its earlier program, that which prevailed in the period before the Supreme Court began its career of devastation. The third conclusion is that on the most important issue before the country today—that of the Supreme Court and the Constitution—Mr. Roosevelt intends to select, of the courses open, the most conservative.

To be sure, there was still a hazy liberalism hovering about the message, as in the old days. But as Harold Laski has shown in "The Rise of Liberalism," there has never been any incompatibility between the capitalist position and the so-called liberal outlook. Mr. Roosevelt, with his program of large professions for the welfare of the common man and the smallest possible concessions by the rulers of industry, is the crowning proof of Mr. Laski's thesis. It is no accident that the reactionary and conservative press now joins with the Administration papers in hailing Mr. Roosevelt's message.

What does the message actually say? It says we must have some sort of labor legislation, a farm-tenancy law, some amendments to the Social Security Act, and some control of the speculative market. It says, more vaguely, that the government must still find a remedy for unemployment, that federal rather than state action is required for labor and agricultural legislation, that oligarchies breed militarism and democracies peace. It says, above all, that the Supreme Court must behave itself and not upset the apple-cart of liberal legislation.

The way in which Mr. Roosevelt handled the issue of the Supreme Court and the Constitution is the final proof of the trend of his policy. To many he will appear courageous for daring to read a lecture to the justices at all. But considering the temper of Congress and the country on this issue, considering the avalanche of bills ready to be introduced that would do almost everything to the justices short of deporting them to General Franco's army, Mr. Roosevelt's words were calculated not to channel this energy into political results but to dampen the ardor of what the newspaper editors like to call "the Congressional hotheads." There were four courses of action open on this issue. One, the most conservative, was to wait for the court to pass on the important cases to come, meanwhile warn it of the need for a liberal and human construction of the Constitution, and ultimately hope for a chance to fill court vacancies with liberals. A second was to conclude from the record of the last eighteen months that the present court would continue to prove an obstruction to any sensible social program, and proceed to enlarge it with new appointments. A third

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was to conclude that *any* group of nine former corporation lawyers is likely to contain a majority of fossils and therefore to give Congress in one way or another power to override the court's veto. A fourth was to leave the court alone, but clarify Congressional power by a constitutional amendment.

Mr. Roosevelt has chosen the first and most conservative approach. That he has done so should occasion little surprise. Mr. Roosevelt is the Great Equiliberator. His idea of the function of government is to effect an equilibrium between the contending social pressures so as to preserve in a healthy state the broad outlines of the existing system. To do this he is not averse to playing one side against the other. In his first administration he used the left to frighten the industrialists into making concessions. But now he is himself a bit frightened at the swing of opinion to the left, and not a little overcome by the extent of his own electoral victory. He does not want to push his social program any farther. He wants to go back to the old NRA—stripped of some of its faults—and the old AAA. He wants to finish such unfinished business as housing and farm tenancy. But there he wants to stop. He wants the Supreme Court to grow less relentless, so that the old program can be restored. *But he does not want to curb the judicial power as such.* He knows that for the Supreme Court to learn how to behave will be a long and tedious process, dragging out perhaps through his whole second administration, and serving to control its pace. If the judicial power were curbed, or if there were a clear constitutional amendment, the barriers would be down, and a genuine program of socialization of industry might be enacted. At this prospect Mr. Roosevelt shrinks back in horror. Hence he asks the justices to become enlightened, thereby leaving the essential power of the court untouched—ready to be used whenever necessary to block radical advance.

This is the meaning of Mr. Roosevelt's message. This is why the ruling groups in America are rejoicing over it. Mr. Roosevelt has chosen to make with them a peace without victory.

Morocco Front

FROM this distance it is difficult to pass judgment on the French reports of Nazi engineers and technicians at Melilla, Tetuan, and Ceuta in Spanish Morocco. There is a strong possibility that the accusations are exaggerated. They may even be deliberately concocted to prepare the public for a shift in French policy which has been found necessary for other reasons. But genuine or not, they are of great political significance. The mere rumor of German activity in Morocco will do more to arouse France and England to the significance of fascist control in Spain than any amount of direct assistance to the rebels on the Continent. The French defense program is based on the assumption that a substantial number of colonial troops can be rushed to the mother country in the event of a German attack. It is probable that British military commitments to France also rest on that assumption. Thus a strong German base in Spanish Morocco which would delay French African reinforcements for several days might prove a decisive factor in the conflict now believed to be inevitable. While there is no confirmation of the report that the Germans have begun to fortify Ceuta, across the straits from Gibraltar, the British have every reason to be frightened at the possibility since a battery of heavy guns at this point could close the Mediterranean to British shipping. The chances are that both France and Britain would risk war rather than see the Germans established at the gateway to the Mediterranean.

In the meantime, the possibility of a joint blockade of the Iberian peninsula is once more being seriously proposed. While the suggestion smacks of the old-fashioned custom of bolting the garage door after the family car has been stolen, it might not yet be too late if prompt and energetic action were taken. The chances are that neither Hitler nor Mussolini is any more anxious for a general war on the Spanish issue than they were two weeks ago, when it appeared for a fleeting instant as if they were backing down. But they apparently have decided to stake everything on a desperate assault on Madrid, in the belief that the city may be captured before French and British pressure can become effective. At present their judgment appears dubious despite the fact that the German and Italian troops landed in the last two weeks outnumber Madrid's international column at least two to one and possess far superior equipment. At this writing the ferocious push of the rebels, assisted by thousands of "blond Moors," seems to have been repulsed.

Germany and Italy will undoubtedly seek to attach impossible conditions to any proposal to enforce a blockade, with a view to drawing out negotiations as long as possible. In fact, the chances are overwhelmingly against an effective blockade ever being arranged. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the fascists will triumph by default as they have in every major issue in recent years. There are at least two rays of hope on an otherwise black horizon. One is the possibility that Germany has overreached itself in Morocco, in which case France may be aroused to the point of challenging Hitler. A complete break-down of the non-intervention agreement, with open support for the Spanish government from all non-fascist countries, would undoubtedly be the quickest way to liquidate Hitler's adventure in Spain. There is also hope that the loyalists may be able to hold out, with or without Madrid, despite the enormous reinforcements sent by Hitler and Mussolini. After all, the Spaniards are an intensely patriotic people, and the presence of the Germans has evidently done more to unify the populace on the side of the government than any development since the beginning of the war. In the long run it may be found that 30,000 or even 100,000 foreign troops are not enough to conquer Spain. It is said that history never repeats itself. But the present generation has witnessed a second retreat from Moscow; and it may live to see a second Baylen if Hitler, like Napoleon, continues to look upon the Spanish people as mere pawns to further his political ambitions.

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A Program for Relief

WE ARE pleased that the President has given definite assurance that no individuals in need of relief will be dropped from the rolls of the WPA during the present fiscal year. At the very least, this indicates that the Administration is aware that relief is still a desperate problem. While unemployment is considerable lower than at any time in the past five years, between nine and ten million men and women are still without work. A large proportion of these persons have been out of a job so long that they have completely exhausted their resources. Many have become unemployable for physical or psychological reasons. Others have lost their skill and are not likely to be absorbed in private industry unless they can be rehabilitated or fitted to perform other types of work.

OUR RELIEF PROGRAM

1. Relief must be adequate for all the needy regardless of the cause of their distress.

2. In order to provide this, the federal and state governments should assume joint responsibility.

3. Work projects should be continued only when socially and economically defensible, and should provide full-time work at standard wages and conditions.

4. The federal government should establish an employment service, undertake a census of the unemployed, and initiate a program of vocational rehabilitation.

It is true that the emergency period for relief has passed. The situation confronting the President today contrasts sharply with that of March 4, 1933. Then it was a matter of somehow getting food to the hungry, and of devising means of safeguarding self-respect in the process. Efficiency and economy were distinctly of secondary importance. Today, at the threshold of the President's second term, the time has arrived for the shaping of a permanent policy. After an economic dislocation as severe as that which the country has just passed through, there is bound to be an abnormal demand for relief for many years. The states are not equipped to deal with the problem. It must be met by federal action.

While the WPA is in many ways more satisfactory than any of its predecessors, it should be evident that no organization of this type can have a place in a permanent federal program. It is tremendously costly for the amount of actual assistance given. Much of the work carried out by the WPA would be indefensible except as a relief measure. If the projects are defensible, there is no reason why the workers should not have full-time jobs at standard wages. Nor does the WPA represent a satisfactory technique of relief. Its "security wage" involves an actual hardship on large families. Moreover, there are hundreds of thousands of men fully entitled to WPA jobs who, because of the recentness of their unemployment or for other reasons, have been thrown upon the mercies of state or local relief. This varies from an average of approximately $36 a month per family in New York to well under $10 in many Southern states.

Any form of relief is distasteful as a permanent policy, since of necessity it carries with it the stigma of charity. Far more satisfactory, obviously, would be a system of social insurance that provided adequate and regular benefits. But neither the Social Security Act nor any legislation that is likely to be enacted by the present Congress even approaches that goal. The 3,000 hunger marchers now converging on Washington will do much good if they merely dramatize the size of the problem of relief.

There is nothing more pernicious than the tradition that the local community should look after its own unfortunates. The fact is that many states and local communities are financially unable to do so. In many communities there are serious legal and constitutional obstacles to obtaining the necessary funds. The federal government, on the other hand, has several sources of income which are practically untapped.

The first consideration of a long-range relief program should be adequate assistance for all the needy, regardless of what caused their distress or where they live. This might be achieved either by a straight federal program or a joint federal-state plan under which the federal government could aid states unable to carry their burden. Experience has shown that standards must be fixed, as far as possible, by the federal government, while administration is often best carried out locally. Government employment projects should be continued only if their utility is beyond question. This should not mean a reduction in the so-called white-collar projects. On the contrary, the federal theater and art projects are undoubtedly among the most desirable of all WPA undertakings. But eligibility should be based, as in private industry, on ability rather than need. Wages, conditions of work, and the right of organization should be precisely the same as for private employment.

Simultaneously, there should be built up a truly adequate public employment service such as already exists in many of the leading industrial countries of the world. This would imply, at the outset, a complete census of unemployment and the establishment of an extensive program of training and rehabilitation. Such a program would undoubtedly be costly, although probably no more so than the present uneconomic WPA. It is necessary if a large section of American manhood is not to be permanently robbed of the right to earn a living.

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Can Madrid Hold On?

BY LOUIS FISCHER

Valencia, January 10

I LEFT Madrid on December 7 and Spain on December 9 to fly to Geneva for the special Spanish session of the League Council. Thereafter I spent a week in Paris and eight days in Moscow and then flew back to Barcelona, where I arrived January 6. I have now been in the Spanish capital four days, in which time I have interviewed Prime Minister Caballero, four members of the federal Cabinet, a number of party leaders, and several well-informed generals.

Having thus obtained a bird's-eye view of the international situation which I can today coordinate with my information on Spanish internal politics and the military position, I feel that the Republican outlook holds no cause for alarm. The general sentiment of my informants is that the loyalists will win, though estimates of the duration of the civil war run as high as two years.

Around Madrid these last ten days the enemy concentrated all his forces. Every available man, machine-gun, and cannon was brought to the Madrid front with the quick mobility which distinguishes Franco's excellent army. Practically all the rebel airplanes—and in number they far exceed those of the government—could be seen in the skies above sadly riddled Madrid. Nevertheless, the progress made was incommensurate with the effort. Madrid itself is not imperiled even by this gigantic, carefully prepared offensive which is sapping Franco's strength. Experts doubt whether he will in the near future essay the herculean task of attacking the city itself, where he must take barricade after barricade.

On the other hand, the Republican army is considerably improved. Its new units have given a good account of themselves under fire, and it is hoped that those which follow will imitate their example. The Republicans find comfort, too, in international developments. Germany's act in sending troops—nobody knows how many—and Italy's violation of the spirit if not the letter of its gentlemen's agreement with England by likewise landing military units at Cadiz appear to have had a disquieting effect on France and England. But something else is disturbing the British and the French even more than these grave events. Caballero told me today that the Germans have placed guns of forty-two-centimeter caliber in Ceuta in Morocco, and that they are fortifying Melilla. The high command at Gibraltar has received orders to stand by, and French and British naval units are held in readiness to steam into the Mediterranean danger zone. Morocco, as in the pre-war period, is again the apple of discord, and the same powers are maneuvering for advantage. London and Paris are apparently convinced at last that Germany is not merely aiding its fellow-fascist, Franco, but playing for much higher stakes, which, if won, will partly determine the outcome of the next Armageddon. France has indicated a slightly more favorable attitude toward loyalist Spain by allowing airplanes recently purchased in America to pass through its territory. But greater assistance must be granted if the balance is to be weighted against the fascist constellation. What is required is a blockade of the Iberian peninsula—not of Spain alone. If Spain and Portugal were hermetically sealed today against all war materials and men, the Spanish government would be victorious within six months. I believe Paris would look with favor on such a blockade, but hitherto England and France have had a working agreement to do nothing in Spain, and because of Blum's weak political position the initiative must come from England. Perhaps a threat to Gibraltar will produce that initiative. Germany is too weak to fight. If Great Britain called "Halt!" Hitler would mend his behavior unwillingly and Mussolini happily.

Essentially, however, the Spanish Republic must trust only its own strength and Russia's friendship. If the Western democracies help, that will be fine, like an unexpected gift, but England and France are split personalities. From the class standpoint these two countries should be opposed to the Spanish Republic, from the nationalistic standpoint they should be for it. Heretofore class interests have been predominant, and we have witnessed the example of the bourgeoisie being unready to defend empires. The capitalist bias makes them objectively unpatriotic. This attitude may be changed by the crudity of German-Italian procedure, but I would not be surprised to see a move to eliminate Hitler and Mussolini followed by an attempt to democratize Franco similar to that made in the summer of 1919, when the big five in Paris endeavored to dress up Admiral Kolchak in democratic clothes.

The republic's resources in the form of Russian aid and domestic supplies are far from exhausted. Indeed, both sources are just being scratched. Moscow is now sending cotton for Barcelona's textile factories and grain for the queue-ridden cities—these are supplementary to other materials. Industrially and financially the republic is infinitely more powerful than the rebels, whose territory is eaten up with disaffection; entire brigades of loyalists exist like islands in Franco's land. The government's greatest element of strength is the hearty support of the population, which it is to be hoped will not be undermined by foolish, premature economic experiments by so-called revolutionists afflicted with infantile leftism at a time when the country requires a government policy which will antagonize no one. Moreover, added energy could be obtained by eliminating friction between the parties of the popular front.

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

Washington, January 10

THE week past has produced forceful proofs that the Supreme Court is not the least democratic of our government's three branches and that both the executive and the legislative are its peers if not its superiors in distrusting the people who support them. President Roosevelt's message to Congress was filled with undemocratic adoration of the democratic process; he bespoke his love of the common people and his trust in their ability to choose wisely the nation's proper course of action on all issues. But he did not trust them enough to lay before them a clear statement of his own intentions, nor did he respect them enough to submit himself to the discipline of having to prepare a complete and rounded program for their benefit. Furthermore, he followed up his message on the state of the nation with a budget message that was insolent in its attempted deceits; what he presented as a budget that "only captious accountants" would say was not balanced was a budget actually no more in balance than the last. The pretense of equilibrium between income and outgo was achieved by a cruel whittling of proposed relief appropriations and the omission of other appropriations that Congress is almost certain to vote. A group of progressives led by Senator Bone has served notice that they will fight to increase appropriations for relief. The record peacetime appropriation for munitions and armaments that Roosevelt proposed offers them a talking-point of which they have not availed themselves as yet.

Congress's exhibition of no faith in the electorate was less obvious than the President's. It made its appearance in some forty bills and resolutions aimed ostensibly at hampering or stopping the Supreme Court in performing the duty intrusted to it by the Founding Fathers, the duty of standing as the last indomitable bulwark against attempts by the people to govern themselves as they, the people, think best. But none of these bills or resolutions was designed to achieve complete freedom for the democratic process. Their authors, while prating of their respect for the will of the masses, apparently feared either to give that will free rein or to trust the electorate to know its own mind.

The measures themselves were merely the froth on the ferment of constitutional reform now brewing noisily in Washington. Two meetings on this theme were sponsored here in the last few days by Richard W. Hogue and his Independent Legislative Research Bureau. They were heavily attended by federal officials and members of Congress. The presence at both of that lethargic conservative, Senator Bulkley, and the impassioned speech in behalf of constitutional amendment made at one by that tory Democrat, Senator Adams, were impressive evidence of the depth and breadth of the interest in the theme.

The major product of these meetings, however, was overwhelming proof that the Congress now organizing for business here is ready to take any step toward constitutional reform the White House will permit, that there is tremendous confusion and disagreement as to the precise nature of the step or steps that should be taken, and that leadership, plus crystallization of a definite plan of action, is all that is needed. In the near future an attempt to achieve such crystallization and to provide the necessary impetus and leadership is to be made here by the calling of a national conference to which all persons who might conceivably be interested or helpful will be invited. The group of laymen and lawyers who for months have been laying plans for the conference are, for strategical reasons, keeping their identities hidden for the present. For weeks and weeks they have been angling in roundabout diplomatic fashion to get Senator Norris to take the chairmanship of the conference. Approached by a forthright and undiplomatic reporter here yesterday, Senator Norris said he would be glad to take the job.

Among those who have added their voices publicly in the last few days to the clamor over constitutional reform are Senator Ashurst, who promised that his Senate Judiciary Committee will hold hearings on his proposed amendment giving Congress "power to make laws to regulate agriculture, commerce, industry, and labor"; John L. Lewis, who announced his willingness to back any "sound" program and added that he deduced from the President's message that the White House is against constitutional amendment and is considering other remedies; Senator Black, who proposed that every conceivable remedy including amendment be tried at one and the same time; Merle Vincent, former NRA official and unsuccessful candidate for Senator Costigan's seat, who proposed as an essential beginning the conference route with Senator Norris as chairman; Senator O'Mahoney, who proposed his own bill with its four-point attempt to fool the Supreme Court; Representative Lewis of Maryland, the House's "Old Integrity," who suggested defying the court by repassing measures it holds unconstitutional; and Senator Norris, who, directing his fire at judicial tenure and limitation of appellate jurisdiction, reminded his hearers that, even if the Supreme Court be tamed, the minor judiciary will remain in position to do incalculable harm and therefore must be tamed along with the rest.

The talk wanders over an enormous variety of proposals, which have for their lowest common denominator an implicit if unspoken belief on the part of nearly all the foes of judicial usurpation of the legislative power that a clear and sweeping amendment of the Constitu-

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tion would not meet with the approval of the electorate. Those who do not take that view seem to be mired in the belief that there is such a thing as giving the people too much power. They believe the majority should rule but only if the majority rules as they—and they include radicals and conservatives, plutocrats and intelligentsia—think best. They do not want the majority left free to pass a Tydings-McCormack military-disaffection bill if it wants to, or to decree that all professing Communists shall be guillotined; and quite plainly they fear that the majority, unchained, would do just that sort of thing. They love and trust the masses, but with limitations, and these limitations differ only in degree from those that animated the Founding Fathers.

The closest approach thus far made to a truly democratic remedy is a proposal that Morris Ernst put forward at the second of Mr. Hogue's meetings. The principal speaker at the gathering at which John Lewis and Senator Norris also spoke, Ernst prefaced his proposal with a brilliant autopsy of the Constitution and the Supreme Court, in the course of which he demonstrated the inanity of nearly all proposals save his own. He went back to James Madison and John Marshall for his own suggestion. He recalled that Marshall, dickering to save Chase from impeachment, suggested that Congress might give force to any law held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court by reenacting it. He recalled, too, that Madison in the Constitutional Convention of 1787 had proposed that Congress be given power to repass a bill by a two-thirds' vote over a judicial veto. Ernst combined the two suggestions into a proposal that Congress be given power to override a Supreme Court decision on constitutionality by repassing the measure by a two-thirds' vote, with the further privilege, if the President then vetoed the measure, of passing it over his veto by a three-fourths' vote. This, as Ernst pointed out, would provide all the various checks and balances necessary to allay the qualms arising in the breasts of those who fear to give the basic element of democracy—majority rule—full play. It would place the supreme power in the hands of the people's elected representatives on all questions of public policy, and hence represents the closest approach yet made to a truly democratic solution of the most pressing problem before the nation. It falls short of being a completely democratic solution only in its mathematics. Ernst defends them only on grounds of strategy. He believes that an amendment embodying them would appeal to the American public's sense of fair play and not be as confusing as others proposed. For his own part, he is quick to confess, he would gladly omit the "two-thirds" and "three-fourths" and take his chance on the electorate's knowing what to do with the power bequeathed it by the Declaration of Independence and burgled from it by the Constitution.

Ernst made two other suggestions which need circulation, for they were aimed at dramatizing the issue and thus helping the fight along. One was that the members of the Supreme Court be summoned, not merely invited, to appear before the Senate and House Judiciary Committees and submit to public cross-examination when hearings are held on any of the proposed amendments or other remedial measures. He bulwarked that suggestion by pointing out that members of the court have made such appearances in the past and, in the past, have not hesitated to take an active part in the legislative process as lobbyists. His other suggestion was that the impending Supreme Court test of the Wagner Labor Relations Act be dramatized by having John L. Lewis in the flesh inject himself into the proceedings and join personally in the pleadings with a layman's statement of the issue.

Detroit Digs In

BY EDWARD LEVINSON

Detroit, January 10

THE future of the Committee for Industrial Organization, most hopeful development in the history of the American labor movement, lies in the hands of the sitdown strikers who have occupied Fisher Body Plant No. 1 at Flint, Michigan.

The sitdowners tell the story in the simple verses of their homespun "Song of the Fisher Body Strike." The dies, key to most of General Motors production, had been loaded on a railroad car in the plant yard. They were to be shipped to some less strong union center, possibly Pontiac. "When the dies they started moving, the union men they had a meeting to decide right then and there what must be done," says the song, chanted in nasal tones to the tune of "The Martins and the Coys." And, "When they loaded up a box-car full of dies, the union boys they stopped them, and the railroad workers backed them. . . ."

> Now they really started out to strike in earnest,
> They took possession of the gates and buildings too.
> They placed a guard in either clockhouse,
> Just to keep the non-union men out,
> And they took the keys and locked the gates up, too.

The attempt to move the dies was regarded by the International union, the United Automobile Workers of America, as a breach of faith. The plant was occupied on December 30. On the previous Tuesday a union committee had submitted demands and asked for a reply by the following Monday. The management's answer was to load the dies on the box-car. Although strikes were already in effect in Atlanta, Kansas City, and Cleveland,

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the International union had not intended as yet to force the issue on a national scale. But General Motors in Fisher Body No. 1 at Flint provided the spark. Fisher Body No. 2 at Flint followed No. 1 on strike, and walk-outs, sitdowns, or both followed in Norwood (Ohio), Anderson (Indiana), Janesville (Wisconsin), Kansas City, Toledo, and Detroit. Helpless, General Motors was forced to shut down additional plants in Anderson, Atlanta, Bay City, Dayton, Flint, Kansas City, Muncie, Saginaw, and Detroit. Today 88,000 General Motors employees are out.

Attention has been shifted from the scattered front-line trenches to union and corporation general headquarters in Detroit. The first week of the strike has been marked by the total failure of peace efforts; the negotiations have served chiefly to clarify the issues in the conflict and to reveal the determination of both sides. The union is ready now to sit down and bargain for an agreement. The corporation insists, however, that the five occupied plants—in Flint, Cleveland, Detroit, and Anderson—must first be evacuated. In other words, they are asking the union to surrender its arms and then resume the war.

The union does not take time to make any theoretical defense of its right to hold the factories. They say they will not surrender to the corporation the dies and sixty-day supply of glass now in Fisher Body No. 1 at Flint, and that they will not march out of the plants so that professional strike-breakers and thug guards may walk in. Homer Martin, president of the union, declares the sitdowners have found a heavy supply of tear gas and other equipment of war in the plants. Under the circumstances the union feels that law and peace are in its keeping. It is taking scrupulous care of the machinery.

That General Motors wants evacuation of the plants only to gain an advantage in a resumption of the war is obvious. The corporation insists it will grant none of the union demands. It says it will "recognize" the union—along with company unions—for collective-bargaining purposes, but will not grant recognition of the union as the sole bargaining agency. For the sake of getting down to peace talks, the union has agreed to waive its demand for exclusive recognition before a conference, but it is asking for other guaranties before it will withdraw the sitdowners. The workers ask that no dies be moved, that vigilante movements and circulation of synthetic employee "loyalty" pledges be ended, that the Flint injunction—obtained from a judge who had 1,000 shares of General Motors stock tucked away in his judicial robes—be vacated, and that negotiations be started on a national basis. To this, William S. Knudsen, executive vice-president of General Motors, has given a flat no. According to its memorandum to Governor Frank Murphy, dogged but unsuccessful seeker of peace, the corporation will not even agree to bargain for a national agreement.

General Motors must have known it was making an offer which the union could not consider without inviting a repetition of the collapse of the 1934 strike. While talking peace to Governor Murphy it has thrown up breastworks for a fight to the end.

First-line attacks of the corporation have taken the form of sponsoring vigilante movements. These have come to the surface in both Flint and Saginaw. In Flint an "Alliance for Security of Our Jobs, Our Homes, and Our Community" has come into existence. It is headed by a former paymaster at the Buick plant and a former mayor of Flint, George E. Boysen. This gentleman insists he is financing the "alliance" from his own pocket. Its strategy has been to enrol as members automobile workers who wish to return to work. Mr. Boysen has variously estimated the membership of the "alliance" at 2,000, 5,000, and 12,000, but he called off a parade planned for Saturday night rather than display the weakness of the movement. The headquarters of the alliance on the main Flint thoroughfare were dark and closed early Saturday evening, while hundreds of citizens patrolled the street. The reporters who have flocked to Flint find Mr. Boysen something of a crackpot.

But all this does not mean that the Flint Alliance has folded up. The technique of these "spontaneous" movements of loyal home folk has always been to depend on outside thugs as ringleaders. The strategy has been outlined by the ebullient Pearl L. Bergoff, who planned it to combat the Akron rubber strike that threatened in 1935. "It was going to be a new idea," said the Red Demon. "No more imported strike-breakers, just local people doing the job." But the nucleus of the "local people," he added, was to be four or five hundred imported mercenaries. To meet the threat of the Flint Alliance, several hundred automobile strikers from other cities are camped in Flint, and hundreds more are available on a few hours' call. The discipline of the strikers is remarkable. Company agents tried to incite a riot Thursday night, when they smashed a strikers' loud-speaker and a meeting near union headquarters, but the riots they hoped to stage did not develop. The sitdown strike leaders tell of other provocation. They have a strict rule that no liquor is to be brought into the occupied plant, and the only time the rule was violated, they say, was on New Year's Eve when they permitted some company foremen to enter the plant. Since then there has been no drinking and no foreman has been allowed "to snoop around" among the men.

The other leading practice of the corporation has been to stir up resentment against the union and intimidate its employees by circulation of "loyalty" pledges. Many of these are distributed by mail with return post cards inclosed. The entire method is devised to frighten strikers with threats of a black list. Some workers who have refused to sign have been discharged outright. By now the petitions have become worthless, except to provide headlines for the kept press. Union leaders have told the workers to go ahead and sign them and then forget about them.

To buttress these pressures, the Flint *Journal,* which is virtually a company organ, displays on its first page a three-column picture of police armed with clubs, tear-gas guns, gas masks, bullet-proof vests, ammunition, and clubs. The papers of the smaller cities, such as the Flint *Journal* and the Saginaw *News,* are abject in their crawling before the corporation. The metropolitan press is less crude. Detroit's papers pathetically feature unsubstantiated

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peace reports, hoping against hope that there will not be a long conflict in which they may be forced to take sides. The Detroit *News* did not print the impeachment demand filed against Judge Black of Flint or the union's revelations of his ownership of General Motors stock until these things were no longer news. The Detroit *Free Press* refers to the alleged imminent return to work of employees as "hopeful news." The Cleveland *Press* headlines Wyndham Mortimer, vice-president of the union and resident of Cleveland for twenty-six years, as an "outside agitator." On the whole, the fault is not with the correspondents on the scene. There are distinctive examples of impartiality and an understanding of the forces at work on both sides. One of these, it is pleasant to report, is the Chicago *Daily News*. Another fine piece of reporting was the account of the Flint Fisher Body No. 1 sitdown published in New York's *Daily News*.

Passing from the lofty stability of the General Motors building in Detroit to the tense but calm offices of the baby union which has tied up the giant corporation, one thinks constantly of the men in Flint's Fisher Body Plant No. 1. Police and kitchen committees, runners to the union headquarters, strike and executive committees, and a general assembly every afternoon at four have placed the destiny of the strike in the hands of the rank and file. Leaders are verbally slow but mentally clear. Rank-and-file cooperation has made the "chief of police" the best loved man in the plant. There is no grumbling, although the men have been in the plant for eleven days and nights. Wives come to the windows to pass in laundry and food, which goes immediately into the general commissary. Women may not enter, but children may be passed through the windows for brief visits with their fathers. Every night at eight the strikers' band of three guitars, a violin, a mouth organ, and a squeeze box broadcast over a loud-speaker for the strikers and the women and children outside. Spirituals and hill-billy songs fill out the program, which closes with "Solidarity Forever."

P. S. I forgot to mention the American Federation of Labor, an easy thing to do these days. It has no members to speak of in the automobile plants, although John P. Frey undertook to order his followers back to work. The craft unions have no contracts with General Motors. Their leaders' telegrams supporting the corporation against the strikers was a piece of work worthy of a feeble-minded Judas. The move has turned out to be a boomerang. The strikers are comforted by the fact that the A. F. of L. is openly against them and not among their supposed friends, where it would be in a position to attempt a more damaging betrayal, as in 1934.

The Pacifist's Dilemma

BY NORMAN THOMAS

NEW YEAR'S bells rang in the definite and open beginning of a naval race which is immediately of staggering cost and potentially far more likely to prepare the way for new war than for peace. But as the old year closed, the great American protagonist of that race, President Roosevelt, fresh from a considerable triumph for international good-will on the Western Hemisphere, waxed caustic in condemning the sale of certain implements of war to the recognized Spanish government. Those who defended that sale were for the most part bitter opponents of the naval race and long-time foes of the international trade in armaments. This is but one example of the inconsistencies, or seeming inconsistencies, in a mad world. Rarely, if ever, has the struggle for peace been so complicated, or have the lovers of peace been more sharply divided. They are caught in the confusion of a world more keenly aware than ever before of the suicidal costs of world war, yet more inclined to accept it as inevitable.

The whole issue has been immensely complicated by the triumph of fascism in Italy and more especially in Germany. Fascism glorifies both militarism and war. It is as surely a menace to the peace as to the liberty of mankind. One may be against both war and fascism, and yet find in every dispatch from Spain grim proof that practically, under conditions all too likely to occur again and again, resolute and effective opposition to fascism means war. Is it any wonder that in this kind of world consistency among peace lovers is not a common virtue?

Among the enemies of both war and fascism are two groups which at first sight seem more consistent than the rest of us. There are on the one hand those pacifists who hold that the great commandment can be summed up in this: "Thou shalt take no part in any kind of war." On the other hand there are those advocates of collective security who proclaim a holy crusade of democratic nations against fascist aggressors. Both groups are more successful in criticizing their extreme opponents than in supporting their own positions. For neither group have we invented an accurate name. To the first I shall apply the word "pacifist," pausing only to remind my readers that there are pacifists and pacifists. The best *pacifists* are not *passivists*, individuals concerned only with their own soul's salvation or believers in divine intervention in behalf of the martyrs of peace. The pacifists can point out that history furnishes melancholy justification for their successive contentions: (1) that the right sort of America could have used its immense social and moral power to bring about a negotiated peace instead of entering the World War; (2) that the peace of Versailles was a peace

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to end peace; and (3) that reasonable concessions in the days when Stresemann and the Social Democrats were still strong in Germany would have greatly increased the chances of victory for the republic against militarism and fascism. Today these pacifists can make no equally practical suggestion in the struggle against fascist aggression, but at least we owe them something for their constant challenge to the method of war and their constant reminder of its bitter cost.

Nevertheless, the pacifism which makes mere abstention from war the supreme command will not deliver mankind from new cycles of war and new dark ages of oppression. It is unrealistic and mad to say that it does not matter who wins in Spain if only the guns are stilled. It matters profoundly not only for Spain but for mankind that the fascist aggression of which Franco is the nominal and brutal leader be defeated. Persons who believe this must support the gallant resistance of the workers and other loyalists.

Those who cannot accept pacifism as the first and last commandment are not therefore the foes of peace. Indeed, the advocates of one form or another of "collective security" speak as its champions. Originally they sought to unite the world against the aggressor nation or nations. They reasoned that if the certainty of united action were great enough, a would-be aggressor would shrink from putting his fortunes to the test of war or even from facing those economic sanctions which the more optimistic believed might serve as a substitute for war. Now—and the change in itself signifies the historical failure of collective security through the League of Nations—those who consider themselves "realists" in contradistinction to the "pacifists" pin their hopes on an alliance of "democratic" states against realms ruled by dictators.

In a powerful and eloquent little book "We or They," an American citizen sees two worlds in conflict—the world of democracy and the world of dictatorship. In the second he places the Soviet Union. Hamilton Fish Armstrong is, to be sure, aware of differences as well as resemblances between fascism and communism. In my judgment he understates the differences, but certainly in terms of practical politics an organization of the democracies against the dictators which must begin with bitter controversy concerning the place of mighty Russia scarcely solves any major problem of world peace. Nevertheless, Mr. Armstrong and the school for which he is a persuasive spokesman make us face a dilemma which Americans cannot escape by mere opposition to war or any feasible degree of isolation.

What then? Shall intelligent Americans seek to build a league of non-fascist states with the definite object of checking fascist aggression, if necessary by preventive war, before German rearmament has gone farther and the continuous advance of science has made war even more deadly? There would be logic in that, but advocates of collective security usually reject it. It is a tribute to Mr. Armstrong's candor that he goes farther and doubts whether liberalism can stand the compulsions which war would put upon it. Yet he favors a form of "international insurance" which, if it means anything, means military alliance, actual or tacit, among the democratic nations.

Objections to this course of action fairly leap to one's mind. Why should such an alliance, especially if it tentatively places Russia outside its fold, succeed where the League of Nations has egregiously failed? The conduct of all nations, our own included, proves that such an alliance would not diminish the weight of competitive armament but would cause each nation to arm the more frantically, not only against fascism but to guarantee its position in the councils of its allies. Even without war this race in militarism would jeopardize whatever democracy we had left. The minute war was declared, America would become a fascist state or a military despotism. This is the calm assumption underlying the War Department's plans for military mobilization. Moreover, a declaration of war in capitalist America would not initiate a new struggle to make the world safe for democracy any more truly than when Congress declared war on April 6, 1917. Ideals would have their place in inducing the American people to accept a new war, but the primary motive would not be, as the Communists hope, a desire to protect Soviet Russia or, as Mr. Armstrong hopes, a desire to preserve democracy. It would be a desire, intelligent or futile, to further national economic interests.

The whole theory of an effective alliance of capitalist states in behalf of democracy is discredited by each day's news. It is not likely that any clearer case for joint action against fascism will ever present itself than the fascist rebellion in Spain. Yet Blum was afraid to act, partly because he feared a fascist rising at home and partly because he could get no support from the British Foreign Office. To this day that great "democracy" over which Stanley Baldwin presides has no clear policy. British mining interests in Spain were original supporters of Franco's revolt. The instinctive sentiment of the ruling class was on the side of the fascists. No abstract love of democracy moves the British government in its growing fear of fascism in Spain but rather reflection on the danger that would threaten the Empire and its precious life line through the Mediterranean should Italy or Germany, or both, gain a commanding position in Spain.

It is facts like these, added to the long and melancholy story of the failures of the League of Nations, which make us challenge the assumption of "two worlds in conflict." There is, indeed, a conflict between dictatorship and democracy—even the bourgeois democracy with which we are familiar. But fascism itself is not basically a conspiracy of wicked dictators against democracy. It is a logical stage of development of the ideals and institutions of capitalism and nationalism. They made the first world war. They made the peace of Versailles. They plowed the soil in which Hitler sowed the seeds of his tribal fascism. Loyalty to democracy, even bourgeois democracy, may well be invoked in the struggle against fascism. But at best it can only win a temporary victory. The essential struggle is still socialism against capitalism, not democracy against fascism. Power-driven machinery has forced a high degree of collectivism upon us. The great problem for workers throughout the world is

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whether they can make that collectivism cooperative and achieve the genuine democracy of socialism, or whether they must ultimately accept the rule of a dictator.

It is preposterous to think that the workers in the United States, in the supreme emergency of war, can maneuver the capitalist state and its military organization to gain their own ends. They may conceivably act as a brake on the state and mobilize effectively against war; they cannot utilize an international war to achieve a workers' victory unless first their country's military machine has met crushing defeat. But the practical conclusion from these considerations is not that the United States should seek ostrich-like isolation. It is that in capitalist America it is mad utopianism to believe that the government can be armed for international war against fascist aggression or can enter such a war at a price tolerable to the American people or to mankind. It is far more feasible for the workers and all lovers of peace to try to keep America out of the pursuit of war profits and hence out of war, and in the comparative sanity of this condition to see that it uses its influence for peace. This is the case for making neutrality and an embargo on the export of war supplies the American rule in all international struggles. It is the case against American participation in the new naval race.

The action of sincere and qualified volunteers who are willing to risk their own lives in the struggle in Spain is a different matter. They are investing their own lives, not conscripting others or involving the government. They are of a long line of men who have said with Tom Paine: "Where liberty is not, there is my fatherland." Those sanctions and economic pressures which can be applied by unofficial groups do not fall under the condemnation of the attempt to make capitalist America an armed guarantor of peace.

Moreover, a belief in the wisdom of neutrality as the fixed policy of the United States in international war—with exceptions to be made by Congress, not by the President—does not mean that a friendly, democratically elected government, such as that of Spain, must be denied access to supplies necessary to put down armed fascist rebellion. It is an ugly world in which anti-fascist forces must pay tribute to private profiteers for the arms of defense. Yet the one outstanding chance of changing that world lies for the moment in preserving for the Spanish government the right to those forms of help which under international law governments extend to one another. To preserve it does not compel the United States to use its navy directly or indirectly to guarantee shipments, nor does it involve this nation in risk of war. To deny it is not only a discriminatory act, deliberate support of the rebel cause; it is also a reversal of accepted American practice. The United States has not prevented the sale of arms to the Nanking government for use in the slaughter of workers and in civil war against the Chinese red army, or to Latin American dictators engaged in suppressing rebellions. It has invoked this policy for the first time in a civil war to keep arms from the government of Spain—a tragic misapplication of the principle of neutrality.

Not a method of keeping out of war but the establishment of a warless world must be our goal.

[*In an early issue we shall print an article by Vera Micheles Dean asserting the need of a united democratic front against fascist aggression in Europe.*]

The Guild Invades Chicago

BY MILTON S. MAYER

Chicago, December 31

ON OCTOBER 20 of this year seven Chicago newspapermen showed up for the regular monthly meeting of the Chicago Newspaper Guild, with their hats pulled down and their coat collars turned up. There were thirty-eight dues-paying members altogether, but the other thirty-one had a feeling that they were being followed. That was the Guild in Chicago, after three hard and hopeless years.

Today, a little more than two months later, there are 240 dues-paying members, and that figure will be too low by twenty-five or fifty by the time this is printed. The revolution has reached Chicago at last. The publishers are pale in their ivory towers. Freedom of the press—the freedom of first-class editorial workers to sing the song of black reaction at $40 a week—faces ruin at the hands of a mob of city-room serfs drunk on Broun and Marx.

Chicago is the toughest publishing town in America. Hearst, McCormick, and Knox own it. Join the Guild? Why not just cut your throat and save the initiation fee? This is Chicago, the town that gave the world the Volunteers, the social-security dog tag, and the University of Chicago red scare. And the Annenbergs. Here's a metropolitan area of 4,500,000 people with only five newspapers. When it had half its present population it had nine papers. If you've got a job, hang on to it. If the boss says Landon is magnetic, Landon is magnetic. The saloons are full of good newspapermen. If they cut you to $35 a week, remember—you're an artist. You're not a common working stiff like the square heads out in the composing room getting $60 or $70. You're the cream of the crop. "The Front Page" was written about you. How about a buck till Monday?

Thus the Chicago tradition. But a few weeks before the Presidential election Hearst capitulated to the Guild in Milwaukee, ninety miles away. Then came Roosevelt's October visit to Chicago, when 150,000 men and women marched past the newspaper offices hooting and booing.

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Then the landslide, which cost the publishers not the respect of their men—they never had that—but the last vestige of their fear. Then, on the day after, with Mr. Hearst's discovery that Roosevelt was a modern Andrew Jackson, the *News's* announcement that it was going to give the President just one more chance, and the *Tribune's* revelation that 26,000,000 reds had stolen the election, Chicago's editorial workers came to life.

On October 7 Don Stevens, A. F. of L. organizer attached to the Newspaper Guild, came to town. He was the third Guild organizer to try Chicago in three years. But this time the cards were stacked for the Guild. Hard on the election there followed a nation-wide succession of Guild victories, topped off by the "Chief's" collapse in Seattle and the signing of a Guild contract by the New York *Daily News*—accompanied by its publisher's little speech about "the spirit of the times." By December 1, Stevens was ready to shoot. The local mailing list had been increased from 250 names—most of them dead—to 750—all of them alive but unaware of it.

The first shop to discover that war is hell was the tabloid daily *Times,* youngest, smallest, poorest, but lustiest paper in town. With a straight New Deal policy and a rip-roaring managing editor who offered $5,000 reward for proof of the *Tribune's* Moscow-for-Roosevelt story, the *Times* had doubled its 175,000 circulation in two years, and in 1936 made enough money for the first time to pay the interest on its $3,000,000 debt. The *Times* had the loyalty of its men by virtue of being the only near-liberal sheet in town, but it was a sweatshop with an average editorial salary of $25 to $35. (Among those who were sweating was the publisher, S. E. Thomason, who draws exactly one-thirtieth of the salary he got as business manager of the *Tribune.*)

A week after Stevens opened up on the *Times,* a majority of the staff of 100 had organized an office unit. Last week the *Times* unit, representing 90 per cent of the staff, drew up a draft contract providing a $60 vertical minimum for three-year men, and notified Thomason that it had appointed the Guild to negotiate. Thomason, who had not seen the contract but suspected the worst, said he was ready to negotiate, but he warned the staff not to drive him out of business. The *Times,* with its working-class circulation, will never let its staff call a strike.

Meanwhile, Hearst's *Examiner,* which lost $843,000 last year "competing" with the *Tribune,* and his money-making evening *American* tried the old tricks of undercutting the Guild drive by posting a new scale of minimum salaries for three-year men, to remain in force "as long as in the opinion of the management economic conditions justify." The "concessions" were so transparent that on the day they were posted twenty-four *Examiner* men joined the Guild. Today the *Examiner* unit has 90 members of a staff of 125 and a scale committee working on a draft contract. The *American* hasn't been attacked yet, but five members of its staff have come in.

The United Press unit has ten members out of a possible thirteen. The German-language *Abendpost* is 100 per cent organized, and its twelve underpaid editorial workers have notified the publisher that he is about to negotiate. The Associated Press Bureau, stymied by an undisguised campaign of intimidation, will not be approached until the Supreme Court decides the Watson case. The City News Bureau, supported cooperatively by five papers, pays as low as $18 a week; five of its men have come in, and the rest are crying for organization. The *News,* with a legend of decency that Frank Knox is too smart a publisher to touch, has a comparatively low wage scale and a six-day week, but it has refused to intimidate its staff, most of whom claim they voted for Roosevelt and Knox. The other day the entire *News* copy desk, except for one holdout, sent in applications, with a note saying, "We have informed the management of our action."

The *Tribune* is going to fight to the death. "McCormick's folly," as this hundred-million-dollar inheritance is affectionately known, pays higher wages than any other Chicago paper—although its most famous reporter, the late Jake Lingle, had to get rich on $65 a week. Arthur Sears Henning gets $18,000 a year for pulling Dubinsky out from under the Colonel's bed. Christmas bonuses run as high as 17 per cent of a year's salary. The old and the faithful get pensions. *Tribune* men enjoy the scorn even of their colleagues on the Hearst papers. The heroic stature of McCormick's framers of fakes is indicated by the plight of a *Tribune* employee of my acquaintance who is afraid the office will find out that his wife trades at a co-op grocery.

Nevertheless, there are signs of unrest among the well-fed toilers in the Colonel's barony. Early in December McCormick assigned two men to "investigate" the Guild and sent a third to an organization meeting. One—count 'em—one *Tribune* man has joined on the promise that his membership in a no longer secret society will be kept secret, and another materialized in Stevens's hotel room at three o'clock the other morning, whispered that half the *Tribune* staff would join up under cover, and evaporated into the night with terror riding his bent shoulders.

After the Hearst papers posted their "concessions," there was a special meeting of the Chicago Newspaper Publishers' Association, and McCormick asked the *News* and the *Times* to subscribe to his policy of refusing to post scales or otherwise recognize that the Guild was organizing. They refused. So the united front of the "toughest publishing town in America" is broken, and McCormick is left alone, with only the courage of his advertisers' convictions to console him.

The Guild victory in Chicago is not yet set down in black and white. But when that has come to pass, as it now must, the whole unorganized Middle West will rally to the Guild banner. Chicago's newspapermen are not altogether free from their "glorious" tradition. They are not yet talking strike. They, and the whole profession in the Middle West, are considerably less progressive than the present Guild leadership. But they are on their way. The other day they learned that the printers' local had just negotiated a contract embracing the highest wage scale of any city in the United States or Canada, after a couple of playful press-time sitdowns by the Hearst composing room. Chicago's publishers may yet picket Guild headquarters.

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Birth Control Wins

BY HANNAH M. STONE

TWO events which occurred at the end of 1936 may signify a turning-point in the birth-control movement in America. Together they denote the closing of one era—the era of pioneering, of preparation, of laying the foundation—and the beginning of another—an era of extensive research and clinical accomplishments.

The first event was the decision of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in the case of the Japanese pessaries. In 1933 a package containing some 120 pessaries was sent to me from Japan for certain clinical and experimental tests. The package was seized at the Customs with a view to confiscation and forfeiture on the grounds that it violated Section 305-a of the Tariff Act of 1930, which, originating from the so-called Comstock Act of 1873, provides that "all persons are prohibited from importing into the United States from any foreign country . . . any article whatever for the prevention of conception. . . ." We felt that this action of the Customs officials offered a sufficiently clear-cut test case for a legal determination as to whether the blanket prohibition of the laws applied to contraceptive articles sent to physicians and intended for use in the legitimate practice of medicine.

On the initiative of Margaret Sanger, and with Morris L. Ernst and his associates acting in our behalf, the seizure of the articles was contested. On December 10, 1935, the case came up for trial before Federal Judge Grover M. Moscowitz of the United States District Court. At the trial Drs. Frederick C. Holden, Foster Kennedy, Robert L. Dickinson, Ira S. Wile, Alfred M. Hellman, and Louis I. Harris testified as distinguished medical authorities that there were many medical conditions which necessitated the prescription of contraceptive measures for the preservation of the health of the mother and the family; and Mr. Ernst, in turn, argued that in view of this testimony and in view of the fact that the confiscated materials had been sent to a physician and were intended for lawful use, they did not come under the ban contained in the Tariff Act and should therefore be released.

Judge Moscowitz, in a very lucid decision, upheld the point of view that the Tariff Act could not reasonably be construed so as to prevent the importation by physicians of articles for the prevention of conception when intended for lawful use. He ruled that the articles in question did not come within the condemnation of the statute and directed their return. The federal government, not satisfied with this decision, appealed the case, and in November, 1936, it came up for another hearing. This time the case was tried in the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, the bench consisting of Justices Augustus N. Hand, Learned Hand, and Thomas W. Swan.

In a historical statement which will undoubtedly have a very wide and important influence upon the future progress of birth control in America, the United States Court of Appeals reaffirmed the decision of the lower court. In speaking of the Comstock Act generally, the court held that "its design, in our opinion, was not to prevent the importation, sale, or carriage by mail of things which might intelligently be employed by conscientious and competent physicians for the purpose of saving life or promoting the well-being of their patients." It amplified this opinion with the statement that "it is going far beyond such a policy [of Congress] to hold that abortions, which destroy incipient life, may be allowed in proper cases, and yet that no measures may be taken to prevent conception even though a likely result should be to require the termination of pregnancy by means of an operation. It seems unreasonable to suppose that the national scheme of legislation would involve such inconsistencies and should require the complete suppression of articles the use of which in many cases is advocated by such a weight of authority in the medical world."

Unless the government appeals to the United States Supreme Court, the decision of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals will remain as the final interpretation of the laws affecting the importation or distribution of contraceptive materials by the medical profession. Actually it means the passing of the Comstock laws, at least as far as contraception is concerned. These laws, enacted in 1873, long since became archaic and obsolete, altogether out of tune with present-day conditions and needs. Laws which define moral behavior cannot remain static. They must be swept aside from time to time by the newer currents of thoughts which spring from changing human needs.

For a number of years now the National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control, under the leadership of Margaret Sanger, has been endeavoring to procure an amendment to the birth-control laws which would free the medical profession from the existing legal restrictions and prohibitions. The decision of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals accomplishes this very fact. It once and for all establishes contraception as a recognized part of medical practice and removes the legal barriers to the dissemination of contraceptive knowledge. From now on hospitals, clinics, and public-health centers will have to face frankly the responsibility and opportunity of including information on contraception as a part of their health services to the community, and we may well expect that clinical contraception will make rapid progress within the coming years. Quite right-

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ly Margaret Sanger considers the decision to be "the greatest victory in the history of the birth-control movement."

The second significant event to take place last month was the Conference on Contraceptive Research and Clinical Practice which was held in New York on December 29 and 30. Men and women from universities, laboratories, and birth-control centers in many parts of the country came together at the invitation of Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau of New York to discuss the scientific aspects of contraception, to evaluate techniques and procedures, and to formulate plans and programs for future clinical and laboratory research.

The first day of the conference was devoted to the medical and biological investigations in contraception. During the morning session Dr. Bayard Carter of the Duke University School of Medicine spoke of the relationship of contraception to maternal health and outlined the various conditions which make contraceptive advice essential on medical grounds. Dr. J. Paul Pratt of the Henry Ford Hospital of Detroit presented a survey of our present knowledge of the endocrine factors that influence and control human fertility. Dr. Raphael Kurzrock of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University spoke of the prospects of rendering the woman temporarily sterile by means of hormones. He mentioned several types of glandular products which may be used to inhibit the ovulatory function, that is, the ripening and discharge of the egg cell from the ovary, and induce temporary sterility without changing the character of the menstrual cycle or permanently affecting the reproductive functions. At the same session Dr. Werner Henle of the University of Pennsylvania surveyed the possibilities of rendering the female immune to conception by injections of the spermatozoa of the male. While the potentialities of hormonal sterilization or spermatoxic immunization have as yet been but superficially explored, they nevertheless offer a wide field for future biologic research.

An entire session was given over to a discussion of the "safe period"—a subject of intriguing interest. Carl G. Hartman of the Department of Embryology of the Carnegie Institute at Baltimore, who has done pioneer work in the reproductive physiology of apes, spoke on the Facts and Fallacies of the Safe Period. All present studies, in his opinion, point to the fact that a sterile period does exist during the menstrual cycle of the woman, but our knowledge today does not justify an unqualified indorsement of the "safe-period" theory, or clinical reliance upon it when it is a question of the health or life of the mother.

In the course of his address Dr. Hartman mentioned the recent work of Allen, Burr, and Hill, who are able to determine the time of ovulation in animals by means of an electrical device. It should be possible in the near future, he said, to find out the ovulation time of a woman by attaching two electrodes to her, setting the machine going, and "when the storm of electrical discharge that accompanies ovulation occurs, amplifying this so as to light a lamp or ring a bell." This statement, of course, caught the fancy of the newspapermen present and was recorded in large type in the daily press. The possibility of such a development, however, actually lies within the bounds of reality and may be attained within the near future. An exact method of determining the ovulation time in the individual woman will greatly facilitate the study of reproductive physiology generally, and should help to place the "safe period" on a more concrete and practical basis.

The general opinion during the discussion that followed Dr. Hartman's paper was that clinically, at least, we are in no position as yet to advise any woman to rely upon the computation of the sterile period for the prevention of conception. The very marked variations of the menstrual cycles in women, which we have found at the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau from a special study of the recorded menstrual cycles of a large number of women, and the absence of a positive method for determining the fertile and sterile periods of the month render this method unsuitable for clinical use. More exact data and simpler methods of calculation have to be available before the "safe period" can become suitable for practical application.

The second day of the conference was devoted to a consideration of the technical aspects of contraceptive practice. Dr. Norman E. Himes of Colgate University, an authority on the medical history of contraception, Dr. Leo Shedlovsky, a biochemist at New York University, Dr. Eric M. Matsner of the American Birth Control League, Dr. Bessie Moses of the Johns Hopkins Clinic, Dr. Clarence Gamble of Philadelphia, and many other representatives of laboratories and clinics in different parts of the country participated in the discussion. Surveys of the present-day chemical and mechanical methods of contraception and the means of evaluating their suitability and efficacy were presented, and the importance of formulating standards and developing new methods and techniques were stressed. The urgent need for a simple, inexpensive, and safe contraceptive, one that would be especially suitable for the women in outlying rural districts and on farms who cannot avail themselves of modern clinical methods, was especially emphasized by Margaret Sanger, and she called for more intensive investigation in this field on the part of the scientists. Similarly, Dr. Robert L. Dickinson, the dean of medical contraception in this country, stressed the need for more and more research. Eager and active at seventy-six, Dr. Dickinson illuminated many of the conference discussions with his rich and varied experiences and his broad knowledge.

Altogether the conference marked a turning-point. The number of universities, hospitals, and birth-control centers represented and the caliber of the men and women who participated in the proceedings marked the removal of birth control from the field of controversy to that of scientific consideration, from the platform and the pulpit to the laboratory and the clinic. It marked the beginning of an era of extensive practical service.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Walter Lippmann's Prize Piece

I WAS much tempted during the last campaign to offer a prize of $1,000 to be awarded to the daily newspaper columnist who wrote the silliest article prior to the election, my plan being to ask the editors of the Baltimore *Suns,* the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch,* and the *New Republic* to act as judges. But I did not happen to have the $1,000 available, and the plan came to naught. I used to think, as the weeks wore on, that Mark Sullivan would be an easy winner if only because of his original and startling discovery, in the middle of the campaign, that there were two new ideologies menacing democracy at work in the world, namely, the creeds of the Communists and the fascists. But each time that I thought he had nailed down the hypothetical prize along would come an article by Walter Lippmann so overpowering as to put Mark into the background.

One of these Lippmann triumphs has been recalled to me by a recent article of his in the *Herald Tribune* entitled Effective Neutrality. The mid-campaign effort was a gem of purest ray serene. The whole of the first column dealt with the next war in Europe. We were told that European military men felt that it would be short, must be short, that every effort would be made to avoid trench warfare and to end the war quickly by destroying the enemy's capital from the air. We then learned how vulnerable the European nations are because of their relative nearness to one another and the concentration of their financial and commercial power and all their government bureaus in their capitals. The thesis was laid down that England, France, and Germany would have to surrender if their capitals were destroyed. As far as that the article read just like a military essay, and then with the turn of the column the real objective appeared. This military stuff was only a prelude to an argument against Franklin Roosevelt's reelection. I did not get it at first, my brains being old and dull, but after a while it hit me.

Here is the argument, as Lippmann put it: A vote for Roosevelt would be a vote for a man whose whole idea was to increase the power of the federal government and to concentrate that power in Washington. Of course he could not do it in four years. But if he were reelected, the tendency would be confirmed and approved, and in the course of time we should be just as dangerously vulnerable to airplane attack as Berlin or London or Rome or Paris, with all our governmental activities in one basket. It might, of course, be several decades before this situation could come to pass, but still the thing must be scotched in November, 1936, once and for all. Therefore all good citizens and true, all who wished to preserve our institutions from destruction from the air, must vote for Landon. Q.E.D. The fact that General Hugh Johnson, a trained soldier, declared the next day in his column that Lippmann's entire original premise was false, and that the countries he named could fight on if their capitals were destroyed, did not really mar this masterpiece. If there ever was a prize-winner, this was it.

Now we have another gem from the same pen. In his Effective Neutrality Lippmann brushes aside the legislative proposals both of those who favor complete mandatory laws and of those who desire permissive legislation. With a stroke of genius he ends the whole debate. We need do only one thing to be safe and that is to "found our neutrality on a program of military preparedness," for that "kills two birds with one stone." It "makes our neutrality effective, that is to say, likely to be respected," and "it relieves the depression, which would inevitably produce the social discontent in which war fevers are generated." Those who remember 1914-17 will recall how great were social discontent and the depression when our factories all over the country were working day and night for the English and French war machines and employment was at its maximum. The next pearl of wisdom is that by immediately going on a war footing we should provide "useful and patriotic work for those who would otherwise be the leaders and the rank and file of a war party." "This," he says, "is no small help in the preservation of peace," for it was not the Allies, nor the J. P. Morgans and the du Ponts who were the war-mongers, but Theodore Roosevelt and Leonard Wood.

This, Walter Lippmann says, is "the only prudent and effective way to remain neutral, at peace with ourselves, and reasonably sane." Well, let us hope that no Hugh Johnson will take hold of this argument, for such a man might point out that war parties are not the creation of months but spring up overnight, that nothing could strengthen a war party more than mobilization, that mobilization inevitably brings not calmness but hysteria, and that with three million men being trained the demand of future Theodore Roosevelts and Leonard Woods to go somewhere and do something with our champing military strength would acquire dangerous if not fatal force. It is impossible to think of any other plan which would more certainly involve us in war. Lippmann himself admits a doubt, for he claims only that mobilization would make our neutrality *"likely"* to be respected.

In case anyone should ask why I proposed to limit my competition to the dailies and did not include those who write weekly columns, I hasten to explain that I wished to save the judges from the possible embarrassment of having to give me back my own money.

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BROUN'S PAGE

You Can't Win

IN RECENT years there has been a great amount of shifting about among the virtues and the vices. Some foibles which our grandparents regarded as reprehensible we now dismiss as trifling peccadillos. But the old boys were more correct than some of the youngsters of today are willing to admit. Gambling is a sin. I ought to know because I've tried it. I'm still trying it, and the conviction of guilt rests heavier on my head every day.

Of course, it will be said that there is no harm in games of chance if the stakes are low enough to make the hazard mild. That was the theory which drew me into the ring of addicts. At my mother's knee I learned to play contract bridge for a fiftieth of a cent a point. On a bad night you might lose a dime. But if you asked me, "Where's the harm in that?" I should be compelled to reply that it is the first false step and that all the rest follows after quite logically. Having lost a dime, one tries in his second engagement not only to get even but to come away with a profit. In other words, you will be shooting for twenty cents. And if I had a table of progressions I could figure out for you very rapidly what this leads to in the long run.

Florida offers many examples of the epidemic quality of mass wagering. It is assumed quite generally that America's playground is ruled by rapacious natives who lie awake for the unwary traveler and strip him of his possessions. It is quite true that they do that, but in all fairness to the natives it must be admitted that they then proceed to toss away their profits by wagering with one another. I was talking just the other day to a man who sells two-dollar tickets in a tote window booth at the race track.

"Mr. B," he said, "this isn't your game. I hope you know that you can't beat this racket. If I had some paper and a pencil I could show you that if you broke even on every race you would still come out behind at the end of the day. Between the state tax and the take of the track you have 10 per cent against you and that's murderous. To put it simply so you can understand it, every time you hand me $2 I give you back a ticket worth $1.80."

"What could be fairer than that?" I asked. "Do you mean to say that this ticket on Boocap which I have in my hand is worth all of $1.80?"

"By some sort of sheer genius," replied my friend, "you have succeeded in picking the poorest horse in the race. I wouldn't be surprised if he is the poorest horse now at the track. I would figure that the two-dollar ticket which you hold is worth all of seven cents."

"Don't be so petulant," I expostulated. "Look at the odds I'm getting. Right now Boocap is ninety-nine to one. I wasn't expecting to get Man O'War at that price."

"The price is of no importance," my statistical acquaintance explained, "so long as you are not going to win. That seems to be the hardest thing for a novice to learn. The problem is one of sheer mathematics."

"I should think it would be very wearing to have to stand there at that window with all those figures flying through your head. What do you do for a rest?"

"I go to the dog races at night," said the man. "Of course the dogs haven't quite settled into their regular form yet, but as soon as they do I can beat the life out of them."

"And if I may ask," I inquired naively, "what is the percentage against you at the dog track?"

"Fifteen per cent," said the man gruffly, "but there are a lot of saps out there and I know enough to make up that handicap. Come out with me some night and I'll show you how to do it. I can't go this week because I'm flat broke and I have to wait for pay day."

It is easy to pick up the taste for gambling in Florida because all the little stores around the schools have slot machines into which the children can put their nickels. The slot machines, I am told, come in three varieties. You can get them rigged to run 60 per cent, 80 per cent, or 90 per cent in favor of the house. At the moment Miami is sternly moral in the matter of roulette, dice, and all the other pastimes of the regular gambling house.

And yet the inveterate gambler need not turn in early for want of some spot in which to follow his proclivities. Only the other night I was weary and ill at ease because I had wagered unsuccessfully on eight horse races and eleven events at the dog track. Naturally I wanted to get even, and I said as much to the guide and mentor who was showing me around Miami.

"I suppose there's no place we can go now," I said. "I hate to go to bed but what else is there to do?"

"It isn't as bad as all that," he said, "we can go to Childs."

"That doesn't sound very exciting."

"But you don't know the Miami Childs," he explained. "They have some of the best slot machines in town. I don't think the percentage against you is more than 30 or 40 per cent. Childs is one of the gayest places here."

And so it turned out to be. There was a dance floor, a Spanish orchestra, and machines for dimes, quarters, and half-dollars. A plate of ham and eggs cost me $15.25, but I have no reason to complain because I knew the nature of the hazard when I risked the first dime. Still, I am moved to a slight curiosity as to the way in which the slot-machine profits appear in the annual report of the Childs corporation to its stockholders. I suggest that in the section devoted to Miami the revenue might run under the simple heading, "Doing as the Romans."

HEYWOOD BROUN

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

A MODEST PROPOSAL

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

THE Theater Guild has recently issued an anthology of fourteen plays* upon which it looks back with especial pride. It is a valuable book despite the odd fact that the individual plays are treated as though they were closet dramas and printed without so much as a list of the original performers or even of production dates. Reproaching the Guild for these omissions, one is tempted to go farther and ask why it cannot present us with an anthology of a different kind—on the stage. Many of these plays are very much worth rereading; why shouldn't they be even more worth seeing in the theater again?

Let me hasten to add that I am not making the suggestion after the innocent fashion of those who complain in general that good plays of the past are not revived more frequently. I know something of the difficulties and of the brutal fact that the theatergoing public does not seem to want old plays except very rarely, when they happen, for one reason or another, to afford suitable vehicles for some unusually popular actor or actress. Thus, despite her strong personal following, Eva LeGallienne consistently lost money at her Civic Repertory Theater, and a year or two ago the firm of Wee and Leventhal gave up the practice of reviving on Broadway very popular plays from seasons recently past. Different as the two enterprises were, low admission prices were necessary in both cases, and in both cases operation under these conditions proved unprofitable.

The experiment I am suggesting is not quite the same and is based, among other things, on the assumption that there is a class of plays rather different from those favored by either Miss LeGallienne or Wee and Leventhal. The latter chose, for the most part, distinctly "popular" dramas of a rather insubstantial sort. Miss LeGallienne, on the other hand, went to the other extreme. She chose mostly certain modern "classics"—almost exclusively foreign—among which were a number, like the plays by Benevente and Sierra, which always struck me as very faded indeed, and which, however popular they may have been with a certain small potential audience, certainly had no wide general appeal. Why she never attempted any of the best and most successful plays by the best contemporary and still popular American dramatists I do not know. Perhaps she found them difficult to cast. But in any event what one usually got at her theater was either a play, like one of Ibsen's, which, however great, belonged distinctly to a former age, or a more recent foreign play which seemed hardly to have sufficient strength to reach across the barriers of an exotic scene and tradition. One would never have suspected that there were half a dozen American dramatists at least as good as Sierra and considerably more pertinent.

There was a very sound artistic reason why repertory disappeared from our stages during a certain period. We were developing a new style of dramatic writing. The theater of O'Neill and Sidney Howard and Elmer Rice had no place for the plays of Clyde Fitch or David Belasco, just as the theater of the two last had no place for those of the mid-Victorians. There was too great a difference in their spirit, and what was a decade old was already outmoded. But the last ten or twelve years have seen no such change. "What Price Glory?" and "They Knew What They Wanted"—both produced during the same season some dozen years ago—are contemporary plays for the simple reason that most of our most successful plays today belong in essentially the same tradition. Whatever difficulties might lie in successfully reviving them, these difficulties would not be the same as those in the way of reviving either a play like "Camille" —which Miss LeGallienne performed—or the plays of Ibsen or even of Shaw.

The experiment I should like to see tried is, then, one based upon certain pretty definite convictions and pointing in a particular direction. It would aim at least at moderate commercial success and would renounce all directly "educational" purposes. Its appeal would be primarily to the regular theatergoing public, and it would recognize the fact that that public stubbornly resists any effort to educate it; that it may possibly send its children to see Ibsen and Shaw but that it is itself so stubbornly and narrowly contemporary as to shun like the plague anything tainted with "historical interest." Merely popular plays should be avoided because they grow old-fashioned within a year, almost, but on the other hand the natural tendency to give another chance to something which seemed excellent though unsuccessful should be equally resisted. The plays chosen ought to be plays which were at once substantial and popular, and the assumption ought to be that there are a certain number of such which would make essentially the same appeal as they made three to twelve years ago. Offhand I can think of at least half a dozen which fulfil all these requirements: "What Price Glory?" "They Knew What They Wanted," "Craig's Wife," "Street Scene," "The Second Man," and "Desire Under the Elms." A theatergoing generation has grown up since several of these were

*"The Theater Guild Anthology." With an Introduction by the Board of Directors of the Theater Guild. Random House. $3.50.

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produced; a good many persons who saw them originally would, I believe, like to see them again.

There are, I recognize, many practical questions which would have to be decided and many practical difficulties to be met. Probably the Guild, if it should undertake anything of the sort, would have to make the productions separate from its regular subscription program. Probably the admission prices would have to be somewhat below the usual Broadway level unless it were decided to emphasize the presence of some "star." Undoubtedly there would be a considerable risk in attempting something which has not been attempted before. But I am not sure that the risk would be any greater than the normal production risk, and what I really want to emphasize is the fact that the attempt would be something new. Nothing quite like it has been tried, and the failure of other "revivals" and "repertories" is not strictly relevant.

BOOKS

Legend and Reality

CATHERINE DE' MEDICI AND THE LOST REVOLUTION. By Ralph Roeder. The Viking Press. $3.50.

THOSE most likely to go into a romantic glow at the prospect of another rehash of the devilish machinations of the Italian queen will be chilled and rebuffed by Mr. Roeder's superb volume—and, it is not impossible, if they can take the punishment, stunned and disciplined into a little good sense.

The name of Catherine de' Medici—like that of Machiavelli and of Satan, with which it has been so fantastically woven—has belonged rather to the province of demonology than to that of history. Two years after her death in 1589 Catherine figures as the villainess in a characteristic pamphlet published in England. Therein her least forgiven sin was cunningly "to fetch the Quintessence out of the people's purses," which pointed to economic considerations that have not particularly entranced her biographers. As a murderess she is more effulgent: "Never were there so many died by poyson of Serpents and other venimous beasts, nor by the crueltie of Tygers, Lybbards, Crocodiles, Lynxes, Beares, and other devouring beasts, since the creation of the world," as by the "tyrannous crueltie" of "Katherine de Medicis, and her Florentine Councell." Earlier, in 1577, Simone Patricke, in the introduction to his translation of Gentillet's infatuated "Contre-Machiavel," was fixing the essential outlines of the legend: "Sathan useth strangers of France as his fitest instruments, to infect us still with this deadly poison sent out of Italy." And from "The Prince," "the Bible of the queen-mother," sprang not only the vigil of Saint Bartholomew but, according to Gentillet, "contempt of God, perfidy, sodomy, tyranny, cruelty, pillage, foreign usury, and other detestable vices." The legend of Catherine is inextricably merged with the legend of Machiavelli, but a consideration of either legend is beyond the orb of Mr. Roeder's masterfully executed purpose.

On March 11, 1513, Giovanni, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was in Holy Conclave elected Vicar of Christ. Leo X's one legitimate nephew, Lorenzo, to whom Machiavelli dedicated "The Prince," journeyed to France in the spring of 1518 to marry Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne, an heiress of great wealth and a distant connection of François I. On April 13 of the following year Madeleine was delivered of a female infant, the mother to die two weeks later of puerperal fever, the father to follow her to the grave almost immediately from a complication of nervous irritation, pleurisy, and syphilis. Ariosto, who had come to Florence to console with Lorenzo on the death of his wife, arrived on the very day that Lorenzo died. He addressed an ode to the frail little life hovering between birth and death, to Catherine, the last tendril of the Medici. *Verdeggia un solo ramo. . . .* At Leipzig Luther was soon to reach the revolutionary stage of challenging the primacy of the Pope; he was excommunicated within the year, and the Papal Bull of Excommunication was publicly burned at Wittenberg. The *solo ramo,* that last frail Medici tendril, was to prove a tough and enduring shoot. Catherine was to live for seventy years. She was to marry the king of France, and though all but deposed because of sterility, she was to see one daughter queen of Spain and three of her sons successively king of France, and to survive eight civil wars. The future which she inherited was that movement which began when she came into being and matured as she developed, and which brought to chaos and disintegration the world into which she was born.

Catherine was herself without imagination, devoid of religious conviction, a believer in astrology and black magic, with a genius for enduring self-effacement, a passionate maternal devotion to the ten children she bore after eleven barren years of married life, a passionate interest in people, and an indifference to ideas that helped her to sustain her lifelong loneliness. In her forty-second year, at the beginning of her second regency under Charles IX, she spoke deep from her heart when she wrote to her daughter Elizabeth, wife of Philip II:

> So, *ma fille m'amie,* commend yourself to God, for you have seen me as happy as you are now, never knowing any sorrow but that I was not loved as much as I wished to be by the king your father, who honored me more than I deserved, but I loved him so much that I was always in fear, as you know; and God has taken him from me and, not content with that, has deprived me of your brother whom you know how I loved, and has left me with three little children and a divided kingdom, where there is not one man whom I can trust, who is not governed by private passion of his own.

Having the invincible quality of never knowing when she was vanquished, based on the inveterate defect of not understanding why she had failed, she spent her energies up to the time of the Bartholomew in trying to maintain by continual adaptation the shifting equilibrium of unsatisfactory compromise. Alternating cycles of rabid war and vicious peace fertilized France for a social upheaval far exceeding the scope of the religious wars, which, religious only in name, were a complex, turgid, confused phenomenon that embraced and hallowed social power and social protest in all its forms—the rivalry of princes, the impoverishment of peoples, personal ambitions, economic pressure, financial chaos, class friction, republican stirrings, reactionary repression. Catherine, the central figure on whom all these forces converged, was a passive pivot, a medium of life, never its master, who baffled and defeated every positive and dynamic impulse. The climax of Bartholomew was a paroxysm of sterility. From that night, when her inert barrenness was transformed into an active force of negation, she became a medium through which all the negative and destructive forces of life were free to

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work. After Bartholomew, Catherine lived seventeen years.

In Mr. Roeder's pages a complicated epoch is ordered about the tenaciously enduring and passively destructive figure of the Medici queen. The luminous clarity of the writing, the vividness of the events in their exorable and dramatic sequence, the incisive insight into the springs of action, the wealth of details that never blur the organic structure of the whole—these cannot be too highly praised. But beyond these distinguished achievements, and without once ever drawing a parallel between the sixteenth century and today, Mr. Roeder has written what is in effect a startlingly illuminating commentary upon our own time. Should we be distressed at being disabused of the illusion that we have made any essential progress in the betterment of man, or find solace in the realization that what we are now suffering was borne by others now at peace?

RAYMOND WEAVER

Man's Worldly Goods

MAN'S WORLDLY GOODS. By Leo Huberman. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

NO BOOK could live up to so neat a title as "Man's Worldly Goods." Man's aspirations have soared toward the life of the spirit, the soul's salvation, and the nebulous goodness of self-denial. But his ambitions have reached out toward the fulness of life, the laying up of treasure upon earth, and the practice of the gospel of the world and the flesh. Here is a theme for poet, pedant, novelist, and historian. Since preachers have made the morals, those who decry the acquisitive arts—from Isaiah to R. H. Tawney—have had the better of the argument. And—save in the movies and the swashbuckling biographies of the robber barons, where romance is at hand to take the taint from dubious values—the pursuit of gain has never had its literary due.

Nor does Mr. Huberman give it unstinted justice. He has cast his theme in the form of a history. The story begins in the Middle Ages, when men affected to despise worldly goods, and the House of God was tripartite: "Some fight, some pray, and some work." It runs on into a more perfect society, in which a course of events which up to the present has been contemptuous of charts falls placidly into grooves cut out for it by the Marxists. All through, the sympathies of the author are for the lower classes; he sees in the systems which are passed in review variations on the theme of exploitation; and the argument does not quite escape the old, old pattern—which has persisted from medieval theology to the American movie—of a helluvasituation, the *deus ex machina,* and the salvation of the proletarian hero.

But in spite of its orthodox mold the book is a breath of fresh air. A series of systems for the getting of wealth are passed in review. Arid abstraction is enlivened by the color and concretion of everyday life. Alien usages are made to live with the breath of passages gleaned from the old documents. Economic history is not presented as an isolated thread in social development. A persistent revolutionary march of a culture—whose changes are too persistent and insidious to be eventful—is always in the background. As they come and go, economic theories are paraded as the ways of thought engendered by life under diverse economic circumstances. The tempo is swift, the sentences are short, events are ever on the march. It is all written, not in the frozen stereotypes of the King's English, but in the American slanguage of here and now. And, most important of all, it is communication, not literary creation. The reader gets without difficulty what the author has to say.

It is not a book for the scholar. So shortcomings are quite beside the point. It is of little consequence that quotations come mostly from standard works, that the doctrines of the schools are too glib, that a touch of the absolute clings to many an argument, that the author has not read too widely, probed too deeply, or pondered too continuously over his materials. A more meticulous or more competent student would have written a poorer book. And a specialist—unless he had remained a man of the world—would have made a mess of it. The asides—see there, get the point—with which the author exhibits his quotations are his genuine exclamations in making his discoveries. No other book can give to the reader so much of its subject in so limited a space. As an example of the art of writing, it all but atones for the evangelical urge that moves through its pages.

Of the making of books by the professional for the laymen there is no end. Amateurs need books written for them by persons who understand their needs. Here is a book written for amateurs by an amateur. That is the key to its quality.

WALTON H. HAMILTON

Two Small Books

THE SACRILEGE OF ALAN KENT. By Erskine Caldwell. Portland, Maine: Falmouth Book House. $3.

THREE TIMES THREE. By William Saroyan. The Conference Press. $2.50.

NEITHER of these slender volumes is likely to affect one way or another our impression of the fundamental qualities of their respective authors. The Caldwell item, written several years ago in a since abandoned style, is quite obviously intended for the back pages of the *Publishers' Weekly.* Collectors of American "firsts" will find much to appreciate in the printing and in the numerous wood engravings by Ralph Frizzell. Of the latter it may be said that it is almost a question whether they were made for the text or the text for them. Mr. Caldwell unfolds the spiritual biography of his hero through a series of sharply etched vignettes, or poetic snapshots, some of them only a sentence or two long, and all possessing the black and frozen quality of the illustrations. The effect is of moving too rapidly through a picture gallery—more exactly, a gallery of horrors. For famine, rape, murder, as well as the more naive modes of depravity so leisurely detailed in Mr. Caldwell's later works, are here concentrated within a few bare images. Also the pressure of the formal scheme results in an over-intensification of style in the individual sections that comes close to the banal and the grotesque. What this experiment must have proved to Mr. Caldwell was that he could not treat his particular kind of subject matter with the usual romantic lyricism, that he could balance its exaggerated violence only with a correspondingly exaggerated simplicity of language. The story is therefore, for anyone interested in the problems of writing, a very valuable lesson in the disadvantages of overstatement.

The stories in Mr. Saroyan's collection are all of recent origin; and it would be possible to show that he is in about the same stage of technical development that Mr. Caldwell was in when he wrote the story just discussed. He is indeed in a somewhat worse predicament, for he has not only not found his proper idiom but he has also not found an adequate subject. All that he still has in great abundance is feeling; but

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while feeling can fill up the whole universe, it may not be enough to fill up one very short story. Mr. Saroyan has succeeded in convincing a number of people that talking about life, art, America, and William Saroyan is the same thing as recreating these somewhat indefinite realities. In the present book he carries the bluff a step farther by burdening each of the items with an introduction describing the source of his inspiration, the condition of his health, the trouble with communism, and the rest. But remarks, as he should have overheard Miss Stein telling Ernest Hemingway, are not literature; and there is no good permanent disguise for the writer who fails to work out and establish an objective equivalent for whatever may be his feeling. Fortunately, there are two indications in the volume that a recognition of this elementary truth may be on the way. The first is to be found in The Man with the Heart in the Highlands, which is rightly labeled "goofy and tragic and comic and classic." Upon examination its success will be found to derive from the fact that it is a single incident built around the personality of a character who is not William Saroyan. It is the one clean-cut example of objectivity in the book. The other successful item is Public Speech, in which the set conventions of American oratory, as well as the whole surrounding situation, serve as a framework to contain the otherwise self-consuming indignation and despair. It is quite as good in its way as the much-imitated Prize Day address in Auden's "Orators." If Mr. Saroyan can come to realize that these triumphs are the result not of luck but of shifting the writer's focus from the self to the work, he may still live to put his admirers to shame.

WILLIAM TROY

The Making of a Boston Brahman

THE LATE GEORGE APLEY. By John P. Marquand. Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

IT HAS been proved time and again by literary critics and by instructors of novel-writing courses that a successful novel cannot be written by indirection, by documents, by third-person relating of events which the narrator did not see and had no part in. Mr. Marquand, in a gallant effort to prove these rules to be without validity, has not only described the life of his hero through letters from father to son and from son to grandson, has not only presented the letters through the eyes and mind of an old family friend who was reporting hearsay, but worst and most impossible of all he has not even begun to consider his hero until that gentleman is decorously laid away in the family vault. It is pleasant to record that this unorthodox method of telling a story is surprising effective.

The late George Apley was the descendant of a long line of solid Boston citizens on whom wealth and culture were bestowed in equally satisfying quantities. Learning, sobriety, responsibility, and the absence of vulgar ostentation were the family watchwords. The first article in the family credo was that Boston was the intellectual and moral center of the universe; the second was that nothing must ever be done to cast discredit on the Apleys. Casting discredit might consist in singing rowdy songs at a gentleman's club or in wishing to end by divorce a marriage that had become intolerable. It might even consist in the impropriety, on the part of a lower and less fortunate family branch, of usurping the place in the Apley burial plot designed for one of the higher-ups. Whatever it was, George Apley's father, as had his father before him, immediately recognized and rebuked

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the rashness and took pains to prevent its happening again. Young George, in his Harvard days, had one high moment of rebellion against the Apley *mores*. He had the temerity to fall in love with the beautiful, sensible, intelligent daughter of an Irish immigrant; he promised marriage, sure that his parents would recognize the worth of his beloved. But he did not quite know his Apleys. The benefits of a European tour, pressed on him in haste by an indignant and worried father and taken in the company of other respectable Bostonians, if it did not open his eyes, at least closed his heart. His marriage to a suitable young Boston lady followed. And George was lost. Thereafter, with a few minor exceptions, he conformed; he was an Apley.

In relating George's long life—from 1866 to 1933—Mr. Marquand has inserted many sly digs at the narrowness of a declining Boston culture. For the Irish immigrants would not be put down. And the day of the Apleys and of those families fit to associate with them is passing. America's Athens has suffered the fate of all empires—it has been captured by the barbarians. Inbreeding, provincialism, the security of knowing the right thing to do and doing it have been challenged and defeated by lusty tribes from Ireland and the Middle West. Mr. Marquand is pleased that this is so, and on the whole he is so merry about it and so clever at disclosing the weaknesses of Boston society that the reader cannot fail to be pleased also. Mr. Marquand is no Marcel Proust; but he is a telling caricaturist of a set of manners that lend themselves happily to his pencil.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

The End of Nijinsky

THE DIARY OF VASLAV NIJINSKY. Edited by Romola Nijinsky. Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

IT IS hard to believe that this diary of Vaslav Nijinsky should have been lost in an old trunk from 1918-19, when Nijinsky wrote it, until 1934, some time after Nijinsky entered a sanitarium. Because even in its present form, as edited and translated by his wife, the diary is a document for the psychologist, not for the admirer of a great dancer, who will search it in vain for revelations of personality. The doctors who were studying Nijinsky's illness should have had these words before making their diagnosis. But apparently the diary was never seen by those who could best make use of it.

And now one wonders why, in all its shocking pathos, it is presented to the world. We must conclude, in partial sympathy, that it is published only in a mistaken effort to earn money for his further care in the sanitarium. Much can be forgiven on that score, though there would seem to be other ways of raising funds. What, however, has to be forgiven is the exposure here of an irrational being, broken by imaginary persecutions and maudlinly exalted, revealing all the typical symptoms of the schizophrenic patient.

Surely it is a pity that Nijinsky's art—an art so peculiarly personal, depending on the memory of his contemporaries for preservation, since it consists in lines of motion lost in space—should be judged across the abyss of his mental torture. If one believes that art is the highest organization of emotion and thought into new forms, a super-rationality, then these words written under the stress of disintegration are peculiarly painful, for they come from a region that is anti-art.

RUTH PICKERING

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DRAMA

Othello

TO THE spontaneous and informal Shakespearean festival current this year in New York the Messrs. Max Gordon and Robert Edmond Jones have contributed Walter Huston in "Othello" (New Amsterdam Theater), with Brian Aherne as a very murderous and spectacular Iago. It is a swift and beautifully pictorial production; it is highly intelligent and not unsubtle besides; but undoubtedly it lacks something in sweep, in power, and in terror.

As given here the play runs hardly more than two hours, exclusive of the single intermission. None of Shakespeare's other tragedies is, of course, in itself so simple in outline or so direct in method, and it is these qualities which Robert Edmond Jones has emphasized. Taking his cue perhaps from the author's own use of the tag line, "Look to thy wife," he has used other speeches like "not poppy nor mandragora" and "Othello's occupation's gone" to mark successive stages in the development of the plot until he has given it an almost geometrically precise outline, which provides admirable clarity while, so it seems to me, sacrificing something of vitality. Speed itself can sometimes be bought too high, and while I am no pedant when it comes to cutting a text, there are dangers in the process. Even in Othello's final speech, "I have done the state some service," there were lines which I did not hear, and I am still hesitating between two improbabilities, one that my ears deceived me, the other that parts of even that great apology were omitted.

Mr. Huston has a natural dignity and a natural intelligence which assured one in advance that his interpretation would be in certain respects admirable, and one is not disappointed. One never fails to feel in him native dignity as well as fundamental nobility, and in many moments at least he is also highly intelligent. Indeed, I think that I have never seen more clearly brought out one of the central motifs of the play, namely, the fact that in Desdemona Othello has "garnered up his heart," that she is the symbol of his faith in life and so much more than merely herself that what he thinks of is not so much the loss of her as that loss of everything else which losing her implies: "Othello's occupation's gone." But if Mr. Huston has natural dignity it is not precisely the dignity of the Moor, and it would not, I think, be improper to say that his dignity is, on the contrary, a peculiarly American one, the sort he exhibited so superbly in "Dodsworth." There is an element of the placid, almost of the inarticulate, in it. It is the dignity of understatement, a dignity almost unaware of itself. And there is something of this quality which persists very inappropriately in his Othello. He has his bursts of passion, but between them he is almost too poised, failing somehow to suggest the barbarous passion which is soon to be released. And that is perhaps the reason why, as I suggested before, the production as a whole lacks something in sweep. It is interesting, credible, and absorbing. But one has not the sense that something irresistible and terrifying has been let loose.

Brian Aherne's Iago is, on the other hand, almost flamboyant in the swagger and relish of its villainy, but it is also highly effective even if, at times, dangerously near the operatic; and concerning Mr. Huston, as well as the production as

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a whole, I should not like to seem ungrateful or grudging. Both are far above the ordinary and both are worth any playgoer's time.

Making now the strange bedfellows which weekly dramatic criticism necessitates, I should like to add my agreement with the general opinion that "The Show Is On" (Winter Garden) is the most generally satisfactory musical revue seen here in a very long time. Neither the Shuberts, who produced it, nor Vincente Minnelli, who shares credit along with a list of others unusually long even for a revue, has undertaken anything novel in plan. What we have is the conventional alternation of comedy sketches with spectacular dancing scenes, but the outlay of talent is most unusually lavish, and for once first-rate performers are given something substantial to do. Beatrice Lillie and Bert Lahr have never been funnier in their own individual ways, and we get, besides, Reginald Gardiner in a new series of imitations, including one of a flashing lighthouse—Mr. Gardiner can actually make a face like a beam of light—which deserves a place alongside the gesticulated wallpaper which made him famous overnight. The dancing is taken care of by the iron-muscled Paul Haakon and the ingratiating Mitzi Mayfair, who can kick backward over her shoulder. But perhaps the most important thing to say is that "The Show Is On" is remarkable among revues chiefly for one thing: there are almost no dull stretches.

At the Chanin Auditorium Erika Mann, daughter of the novelist, is presenting her "Pepper Mill," a sort of *café chantant* which has operated previously in various European cities. Two or three American performers have been added, but the nucleus of the organization is composed of German refugees and the enterprise is sponsored by a group of prominent persons active in the movement to aid exiles. Miss Mann acts as mistress of ceremonies, while the chief performers are Therese Giehse, Lotte Goslar, and Sybille Schloss, all of whom were formerly well known on the German stage. Miss Giehse's "Stupidity Talks," in which she impersonates a sort of idiot Brunnhilde, is outstanding, and so are the satiric dances of Miss Goslar, but much of the material suffers somewhat from the fact that it is keyed to moods which, fortunately, we have so far hardly been compelled to understand. The "Pepper Mill" company has great talents, but it still needs to find itself in the American scene.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

M. Bernstein's "Promise" (Little Theater) deals with misdirected affections in a French upper-class family group which consists of an elderly second husband, a still attractive and vain wife, the daughters of the wife's two marriages, and a young man who is engaged to one sister and in love with the other. The notable English cast, which includes Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Irene Browne, Frank Lawton, and Jean Forbes-Robertson, provides the play with dramatic force and coherence through sheer brilliance of acting. The production provides an interesting example of the actor's importance in giving a tenuous play direction and distinction.

M. G.

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FILMS

Muscle Movies

JAMES CAGNEY is on the screen again after a year's absence from it, and he brings back all the swagger for which he was famous in the old days of 1935. "Great Guy" (Grand National) is so exactly like each of his other pictures, indeed, as to provide after this breathing-spell an opportunity for defining his charm. For he is charming in a way that most of our muscular heroes are not. The tradition of the tough guy and the hard mug, not to speak of the sudden uppercut to somebody's chin, was wearisome almost from the start; but Mr. Cagney has worn well. His size has something to do with it, since he is surprisingly sawed off. And so has his humor, which consists in confessing that there is something a bit grotesque in the big brave parts he plays; in confessing, too, that his boy friends and his girl friends are probably right when they predict that if he keeps on in the way he is going he will run into trouble and plenty of it. But there is something else in his acting, and it has more meaning than either of these things could possibly have.

His strength is not in his right arm but in his spirit, which explodes within him and explains his smile. His smile is chiefly for himself, and it expresses a sense that the world is swarming with villains to be knocked down—not by the next fellow, but by him. His test for villainy is of course pretty simple. The bully, the deceiver, the stuffed shirt, the fraud—that exhausts the list. Yet it is not a bad list, and Mr. Cagney as I have said is a terrier constantly at their throats, a gadfly who can sting in several places at once. And this is because he does really seem to hate the evil at which he strikes. He is a cocky little lover of the good. No wonder we like him.

But there is something beyond even this. The good he loves is the natural and common good for which we have no name

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and which there are no institutions to represent. Mr. Cagney's roles have always showed him disrespectful of authority, or at any rate suspicious of it. And the fact that "Great Guy" places him in a city government where his job is to eliminate the weights-and-measures racketeers in no way alters the situation now. For the authority in this city is a super-government of district leaders and dirty millionaires, so that as a mere deputy Johnny Cave is nobody at all—until he gets going. Then he makes the feathers fly; and he does it with a heart so unimpeachably in the right place that—well, no wonder we like him. He has come to the defense of that anonymous humanity whose rights can never be put into words. They can only be put into the bow of Robin Hood and shot at sheriffs.

A very different sort of Robin Hood was to be seen in "Janosik," a Czecho-Slovakian film which succeeded "La Kermesse Héroïque" at the Filmarte. It followed the pattern more closely, since its hero Janosik, a peasant of the early eighteenth century, organized the mountaineers of Bohemia for the purpose of robbing the Hapsburgs and relieving the native poor. The Hapsburgs were represented as extremely cruel in their fur coats and the Bohemians as extremely noble in their strange wool garments and their high square hats from which dangled long pigtails of black hair. But this was as it should be in a film so strong and simple. "Janosik" was as different from "La Kermesse" as a film could be, yet it was probably as good. Palo Belik, the tender giant who played Janosik, was worthy of the role; and the landscape was always very skilfully worked into what was finally an effect of great and tragic wildness. The current Swiss film at the same theater, "The Eternal Mask," is an interesting study of a young doctor's mind, more mysterious before it plunges into his subconscious than after, but worthy of the closest attention throughout.

"Revolutionists" (Amkino) has an advantage over many recent Russian films in that it returns to the days before 1917 for its material. The revolution as an accomplished fact has not been the best sort of subject matter, probably for the reason that success is uninteresting to the imagination. The present film in any event takes us as far back as 1896, and indeed stops in December of the bloody year 1905. It has a special interest as showing the student class at work underground in the early days of this century, and as being among other things an excellent costume piece. The exiles in Paris, the aristocrats on the streets of St. Petersburg, and the intellectuals in Siberia are fascinating if only for the clothes they wear; though they are also figures in an absorbing story. The workers preparing to march on the fatal ninth of January, 1905, are handled furthermore with a fine photographic sense which permits of their pausing now and then to present themselves in "stills" of great beauty and power. Producers of moving pictures can never afford to forget that what they are producing after all is pictures. We do not mind in the least being forced to remember the camera.

"After the Thin Man" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) restores William Powell to his role as Nick Charles, the unwilling detective, and brings Myrna Loy with him as the pretty Mrs. Charles. It is not as good as "The Thin Man," partly because it is too much like it; but of course it is very funny, and the direction of W. S. Van Dyke gives us as usual a whirl of sophisticated thrills. "Beloved Enemy" (United Artists), with Brian Aherne as hero of the Irish republican army in 1921, suffers by comparison with "The Informer." Yet it proves once again that the Irish rebellion is a first-rate subject in any medium.

MARK VAN DOREN

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The American Society for Technical Aid to Spanish Democracy (Officers: Waldo Frank, chairman; Paul Crosby, vice-chairman; John Howard Lawson, secretary; William E. Browder, treasurer) asks your help in sending American workers to work in Spain.

William E. Browder, Treasurer
American Society for Technical Aid to Spanish Democracy
31 East 27th Street, New York, N. Y.

Enclosed is $..... as my contribution to send American workers to Spain to help the Spanish people win their fight against fascist invaders.

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Letters to the Editors

[*In recent weeks* THE NATION *has published two articles by Albert Viton and one by Philip S. Bernstein discussing the situation in Palestine from contrasting points of view. From the many letters received commenting upon the discussion the editors have selected the following excerpts which seemed to present the widest range of opinion and additional material.*]

The Dilemma in Palestine

Dear Sirs: Permit me to observe that Albert Viton's articles do not contribute to an objective understanding of the situation in Palestine. The statement that 29 per cent of the peasantry are landless is derived from the discredited Hope Simpson report, based in turn on a misinterpretation of the Johnson Crossbie study. The "landless" Arabs are denominated in the latter as "laborers," by which was meant any farmer not in possession of the fee, that is, tenant farmers, village workmen, heirs expectant, and others who are not properly "landless." Since Jews own only 6 per cent of the land, Viton is misleading here.

Again, no informed person would say: "A. Granovsky . . . claims that only 688 peasants have been displaced in the plains of Esdraslon and Acre, but evidence before the [1929] commission . . . showed that about 2,000 had been so displaced." The former figures were entirely correct, as proved by the government report in 1934 that less than 688 peasants had applied for resettlement on state lands as persons displaced by Jewish colonization. *And this included the whole of Palestine.*

It is completely untrue that Zionists oppose any scheme to resettle Arabs on the soil, for it is obvious that Jewish resettlement depends on intensive cultivation of soil by Jews and Arabs. In 1930 the Jewish Agency advanced to Hope Simpson a memorandum entitled "Palestine, Land Settlement, Urban Development, and Immigration," which constituted a feasible plan for coordinating unused Arab lands, Jewish capital, and legislation for resettlement. This plan would be accepted today if sanctioned by the government.

As Viton has quoted Yari to the effect that Arab unionization strengthens Zionism, it is pointless to discuss at length his cruel libels against Socialist Zionists. Jewish workers have insisted on their share of work on Jewish enterprises because (a) cheap Arab labor is used to demoralize the wage scale below that on which white men can live, (b) Jewish enterprises are possible only because the Zionist movement has spent huge sums of money to transform the Jew from middleman to farmer and laborer, and these funds would cease to flow were the benefits of Zionism used to create a race of capitalists, (c) Arab labor itself is undersold by even cheaper labor from the Hauran, (d) Arab labor can seek employment in Arab enterprises, which are subsidized to the extent of £2,500,000 per annum by purchases from the Arab farmers by Jews. The experience of trade unions in America has shown that black labor must be unionized by white labor or both face ruin. In Palestine Jewish labor, to maintain its own standards, must organize the exploited Arab.

Whether or not the mandate should be internationally controlled and the Holy Land strictly neutralized deserves serious consideration, but it has nothing whatever to do with the main purpose of the mandate, namely, to facilitate the creation of the Jewish National Home. And it is this to which the Arabs object, regardless of the benefits conferred upon themselves.

ELEAZAR LIPSKY,
Member of the Executive of Masada
New York, January 4

Democracy Will Resolve It

Dear Sirs: I went to Palestine in 1929—toured the country, visited Jewish colonies and Arab villages, and conferred with Jewish, Arab, and English leaders. Everything that I saw and heard then on the actual scene, everything that I have been able to learn since, has established these facts in my mind:

1. The Jews have taken a barren country and turned it into one of the most fruitful regions of the Eastern world.

2. The Jews have shared with the Arabs the benefits produced by their labor and sacrifice—the university, the schools, the hospitals, the welfare centers, the increased wealth of production, the improved standard of living.

3. Jews and Arabs at the bottom, on the land, in the labor and life of the common people, have learned to cooperate in ever-closer understanding.

4. The trouble in Palestine comes primarily from the top—from the feudal landowners as they see an Arab peasantry liberated by Jewish influence and thus passing out of their control, and from the English imperialists as they see a rapidly growing Jewish population refusing to go "native" or to take the status of "natives."

5. The trouble becomes intense just in proportion as it moves slowly but surely toward a solution in the amalgamation of the working masses of both races in the control and service of their common interests.

Nationalistic feeling, whether on the Arab or on the Jewish side, is a condiment which makes the dish hot, but does not change its constituent elements.

Time in this case will do its perfect work. Fundamental democratic forces, shared by the two races concerned, can be trusted to solve all present difficulties. In the long run we may regard Palestine as one of the few spots on the surface of the globe today which we do not have to worry about.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
Brooklyn, January 5

Palestine's Resources

Dear Sirs: The success of the Zionist achievement is to be judged by the social and cultural values created in Palestine rather than by the absolute number of Jews settled in the country. This is, however, no reason for a gross underestimation of the absorbtive capacity of Palestine, such as is presented in Mr. Viton's recent articles. According to Mr. Viton's own figures, somewhat more than half of Palestine is Transjordania, and this region is more fertile than Cis-Jordan, having been one of the great granaries of the Roman Empire in ancient days. Its present population is only 300,000, and there is no reason to believe that it should not equal the three million which Mr. Viton assigns to Cis-Jordan. Furthermore, one-half of Cis-Jordan is the Beersheba district, which has a present population of less than 100,000. It is known that this district has some subsurface water, though how much has not

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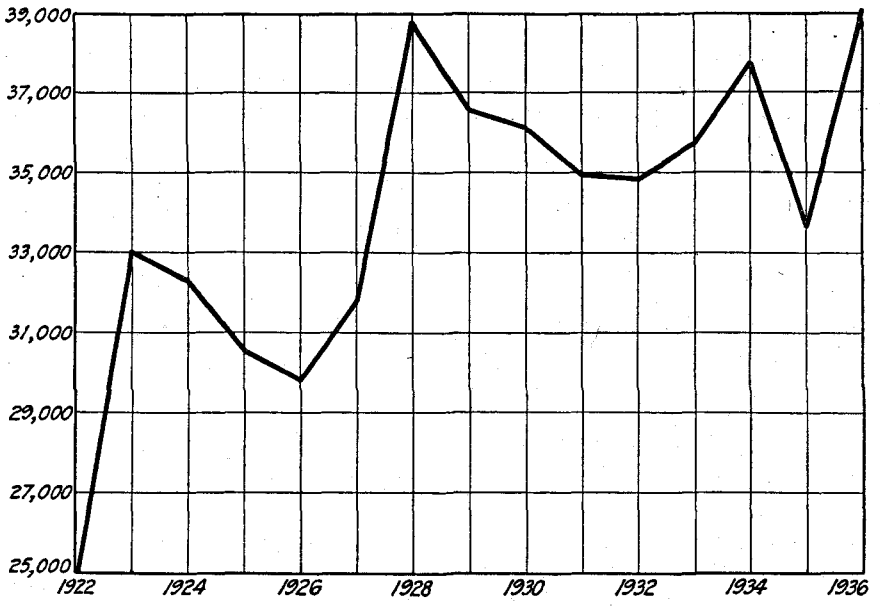

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Principal credit belongs, of course, to *The Nation's* contributors who include a large number of the leaders in progressive thought throughout the world. They help you understand the headlines of today and prepare you for those of tomorrow. Through the cold, hard eye of the militant progressive, they scrutinize every significant event to show you why it is a stride forward or a step backward. Readers who disagree with their views admit, nevertheless, that they perform a service of extraordinary value in clarifying issues, attacking shams, and upholding progressive principles. As critics of the passing scene, these writers have made a distinct place for themselves —and for *The Nation.*

You need not be reminded that the world is torn with dissension and hate. Never before was it more essential to keep alive the liberal and progressive fires. Accordingly, we hope that you will continue to be informed on progressive thought, and thereby contribute to the steady growth of *The Nation.*

SOME CONTRIBUTORS TO THE UNPRECEDENTED POPULARITY OF *THE NATION*

The success of any magazine depends on its ability to meet the exacting demands of its readers. These contributors to *The Nation* during 1936 include many of the leaders in progressive thought in America and Europe today.

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been determined. With irrigation this region may be expected to be very fertile.

In the northern half of Palestine proper, to which Jewish immigration has up to the present been limited, Jewish agricultural settlements have been largely confined to what were wastelands in the Sharon plain and the Emek, but the wastelands in these regions are as yet only about half-occupied, and the Huleh Valley and Jordan Valley, both of which at present support the scantiest population, have a total area approximately equal to that which has up to the present time been placed under Jewish cultivation. One has to look no farther than these two regions to provide for the doubling of the present Jewish agricultural population.

In the hill country the Arabs work small fertile valleys with very ineffective means. Yet these regions support a farming population of about 400,000. The surrounding hills are barren and are used by the Arabs to graze their goats, so that any tiniest shoot or blade of grass is eaten up, and the top soil is washed off by the rains each winter. The few experiments by the government and the Jews in afforestation and by the Jews in the planting of vineyards and orchards have been very successful. No estimate can at present be made as to the agricultural population which these now barren hills can support, but it is quite possible that the restoration of top soil would make the land fertile again and in addition save a great deal of the water which now runs off in floods during the rainy season. However, even using Mr. Viton's figures, it is plain that the hill country which now supports 400,000 Arabs at a low level of subsistence on an average of thirty dunams per person can be made to support six times that number, at a higher level of subsistence, by the use of modern methods.

Palestine's commercial and industrial possibilities have only just begun to be explored. Mr. Viton is not correct in stating that industrial production has begun to approach the saturation point. Large and still increasing imports of consumer goods into Palestine are clear indications of the magnitude of the available market. The difficulties are not due to a boycott of Jewish goods by Arabs, but to the facts that the young industries have not yet reached a competitive level with European and Japanese goods, and that the Arab demand for manufactured goods is still very small.

Mr. Viton is on sounder ground when he points out that the British administration has been actuated by motives reflecting the interests of the Empire as a whole rather than an interest in the success of the Palestine experiment. He is also on sound ground when he points to the rising tide of Arab nationalism. The problem of finding a basis for permanent peace between the two communities is undoubtedly complex and difficult. The first prerequisite to peace is that the Arabs should learn that the Jews are in Palestine to stay. The self-controlled resistance of the Jews to the recent uprisings has been an enormously useful demonstration on this point, and it is instructive to realize that whereas the Arab leaders in 1929 demanded that the Jews be put out of the country, they are now demanding a limitation of Jewish immigration. It is by no means incredible that the Young Arab leaders will eventually find in alliance with the Jews the best means of advancing the interests of their own people and of throwing off their feudal yoke.

JONAS S. FRIEDENWALD

Baltimore, December 31

It Won't Work

Dear Sirs: The "Promise of Zionism" held out by Rabbi Bernstein is as close to reality as the pie-in-the-sky promises the Jewish clergy have been making to the poor, misguided, persecuted Jews for thousands of years. This leadership has created in the majority of Jews an attitude of exclusiveness towards the "Promised Land," a "Chosen People" psychology, that makes for emotionalism in a problem that cries for a rational approach and solution. Rabbi Bernstein speaks of the international aspect of anti-Semitism; of the beneficent effect of the Jew's herculean reclamation accomplishments upon the Arabs and the country. Bravo! When the Arabs and the Moslem world sing the praises of the Jewish colonists and invite them as welcome co-adventurers, then the time will be propitious for colonization. Being a mundane realist I am certain that this time will never come.

The Jews admittedly accomplished great things in Germany too—only to reap a reward of hatred. The same will happen in any land or venture where the Jews force their presence, as Jews, upon a people unwilling to assimilate them. The hostility of the Moslem hinterland will some day loose itself upon the colonists. When this time does come the pogroms of Poland, Rumania, old Russia, and Germany will be reenacted again. Whether it be Cuba, the Argentine, Africa, or Biro-Bidjan, the Jew must find a refuge where both the population and the terrain are more friendly than they are in Palestine.

Rabbi Bernstein, like the rest of his kind, takes a parting shot at Biro-Bidjan and cites its failure. This may be true. But the fault is not Biro-Bidjan's; the fault is the Jew's. Had the efforts and resources that went into Palestine been put into the Biro-Bidjan venture, the Jew's future might have been made secure from the ravages of defeatism, ghettoism, and mysticism.

E. J. KRAUSE

Brooklyn, January 1

CONTRIBUTORS

EDWARD LEVINSON is labor editor of the New York *Post* and author of "I Break Strikes."

MILTON S. MAYER recently resigned a position as reporter on Hearst's Chicago *American* "in an attempt," he writes us, "to buy back my soul." Now a free-lance journalist, he has contributed articles on political subjects to *Forum, Today,* and *Survey Graphic.*

DR. HANNAH M. STONE, one of New York's leading gynecologists, is medical director of the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau and coauthor with Dr. Abraham Stone of "A Marriage Manual." She was the defendant in the recent case in the Circuit Court of Appeals which resulted in Judge Augustus Hand's momentous decision freeing the medical profession from the restrictions of the Comstock statutes.

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